MARY ANERLEY:

A YORKSHIRE TALE.

BY

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

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CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

CHAPTER II.

CHAPTER III.

CHAPTER IV.

CHAPTER V.

[illegible] CHAPTER VI.

[illegible] HAPTER VII.

MARY ANERLEY.

CHAPTER I.

A FARM TO LET.

THAT storm on the festival of St. Michael broke up the short summer weather of the north. A wet and tempestuous month set in; and the harvest, in all but the very best places, lay flat on the ground, without sithe or sickle. The men of the Riding were not disturbed by this, as farmers would have been in Suffolk; for these were quite used to walk over their crops, without much occasion to lift their feet. They always expected their corn to be laid, and would have been afraid of it, if it stood upright. Even at Anerley Farm, this salaam of the wheat was expected in bad seasons; and it suited the reapers of

the neighbourhood, who scarcely knew what to make of knees unbent, and upright discipline of stiff-cravated ranks.

In the north-west corner of the county, where the rocky land was mantled so frequently with cloud, and the prevalence of western winds bore sway, an upright harvest was a thing to talk of, as the legend of a century, credible because it scarcely could have been imagined. And this year it would have been hard to imagine any more prostrate and lowly position than that of every kind of crop. The bright weather of August and attentions of the sun, and gentle surprise of rich dews in the morning, together with abundance of moisture underneath, had made things look as they scarcely ever looked—clean, and straight, and elegant. But none of them had found time to form the dry and solid substance, without which neither man, nor his staff of life, can stand against adversity.

"My Lady Philippa," as the tenants called her, came out one day to see how things looked, and whether the tenants were likely to pay their Michaelmas rents at Christmas. Her sister, Mrs. Carnaby, felt like interest in the question, but hated long walks, being

weaker and less active, and therefore rode a quiet pony. Very little wheat was grown on their estates, both soil and climate declining it; but the barley crop was of more importance, and flourished pretty well upon the southern slopes. The land, as a rule, was poor and shallow, and nourished more grouse than partridges; but here and there valleys of soft shelter, and fair soil, relieved the eye and comforted the pocket of the owner. These little bits of Goshen formed the heart of every farm; though oftentimes the homestead was, as if by some perversity, set up in bleak and barren spots, outside of comfort's elbow.

The ladies marched on, without much heed of any other point than one—would the barley crop do well? They had many tenants who trusted chiefly to that, and to the rough hill-oats, and wool, to make up in coin what part of their rent they were not allowed to pay in kind. For as yet machinery, and reeking factories, had not besmirched the country-side.

"How much further do you mean to go, Philippa?" asked Mrs. Carnaby, although she was not travelling by virtue of her own legs. "For my part, I think we have gone too far already."

"Your ambition is always to turn back. You may turn back now, if you like. I shall go on." Miss Yordas knew that her sister would fail of the courage to ride home all alone.

Mrs. Carnaby never would ride without Jordas, or some other serving-man behind her, as was right and usual for a lady of her position; but "Lady Philippa" was of bolder strain, and cared for nobody's thoughts, words, or deeds. And she had ordered her sister's servant back, for certain reasons of her own.

"Very well, very well. You always will go on; and always on the road you choose yourself. Although it requires a vast deal of knowledge, to know that there is any road here at all."

The widow, who looked very comely for her age, and sate her pony prettily, gave way (as usual) to the stronger will; though she always liked to enter protest, which the elder scarcely ever deigned to notice. But hearing that Eliza had a little cough at night, and knowing that her appetite had not been as it ought to be, Philippa (who really was wrapped up in her sister, but never or seldom let her dream of such a fact) turned round graciously and said,—

"I have ordered the carriage here for half-past three o'clock. We will go back by the Scarbend road, and Heartsease can trot behind us."

"Heartsease, uneasy you have kept my heart by your shufflings and trippings perpetual. Philippa, I want a better stepping pony. Pet has ruined Heartsease."

"Pet ruins everything and everybody; and you are ruining him, Eliza. I am the only one who has the smallest power over him. And he is beginning to cast off that. If it comes to open war between us, I shall be sorry for Lancelot."

"And I shall be sorry for you, Philippa. In a few years, Pet will be a man. And a man is always stronger than a woman; at any rate in our family."

"Stronger than such as you, Eliza. But let him only rebel against me, and he will find himself an outcast. And to prove that, I have brought you here."

Mistress Yordas turned round, and looked in a well-known manner at her sister; whose beautiful eyes filled with tears, and fell.

"Philippa," she said with a breath like a sob; "sometimes you look harder than poor

dear papa, in his very worst moments, used to look. I am sure that I do not at all deserve it. All that I pray for is peace and comfort; and little do I get of either."

"And you will get less, as long as you pray for them, instead of doing something better. The only way to get such things is to make them."

"Then I think that you might make enough for us both; if you had any regard for them, or for me, Philippa."

Mistress Yordas smiled, as she often did, at her sister's style of reasoning. And she cared not a jot for the last word, so long as the will and the way were left to her. And in this frame of mind she turned a corner from the open moor-track into a little lane, or rather the expiring delivery of a lane, which was leading a better existence further on.

Mrs. Carnaby followed dutifully, and Heartsease began to pick up his feet, which he scorned to do upon the negligence of sward. And following this good lane, they came to a gate, corded to an ancient tree, and showing up its foot, as a dog does when he has a thorn in it. This gate seemed to stand for an ornament, or perhaps a landmark; for the lane,

instead of submitting to it, passed by upon either side, and plunged into a dingle, where a gray old house was sheltering. The lonely moorside farm—if such a wild and desolate spot could be a farm—was known as "Wallhead," from the relics of some ancient wall; and the folk who lived there, or tried to live, although they possessed a surname—which is not a necessary consequence of life—very seldom used it, and more rarely still had it used for them. For the ancient fashion still held ground of attaching the idea of a man to that of things more extensive and substantial. So the head of the house was "Will o' the Wallhead;" his son was "Tommy o' Will o' the Wallhead," and his grandson, "Willy o' Tommy o' Will o' the Wallhead." But the one their great lady desired to see was the unmarried daughter of the house, "Sally o' Will o' the Wallhead."

Mistress Yordas knew that the men of the house would be out upon the land, at this time of day, while Sally would be full of household work, and preparing their homely supper. So she walked in bravely at the open door, while her sister waited with the pony in the yard. Sally was clumping about

in clog-shoes, with a child or two sprawling after her (for Tommy's wife was away with him at work), and if the place was not as clean as could be, it seemed as clean as need be.

The natives of this part are rough in manner, and apt to regard civility as the same thing with servility. Their bluntness does not proceed from thickness, as in the South of England; but from a surety of their own worth, and inferiority to no one. And to deal with them rightly, this must be entered into.

Sally o' Will o' the Wallhead, bobbed her solid and black curly head, with a clout like a jelly on the poll of it, to the owner of their land, and a lady of high birth; but she vouchsafed no curtsey, neither did Mistress Yordas expect one. But the active and self-contained woman set a chair in the low, dark room, which was their best; and stood waiting to be spoken to.

"Sally," said the lady, who also possessed the Yorkshire gift of going to the point; "you had a man ten years ago; you behaved badly to him, and he went into the Indian Company."

"A' deed," replied the maiden, without any blush, because she had been in the right throughout; "and noo a' hath coom in a better moind."

"And you have come to know your own mind about him. You have been steadfast to him for ten years. He has saved up some money, and is come back to marry you."

"I heed nane o' the brass. But my Jack is back again."

"His father held under us for many years. He was a thoroughly honest man, and paid his rent as often as he could. Would Jack like to have his father's farm? It has been let to his cousin, as you know; but they have been going from bad to worse; and everything must be sold off, unless I stop it."

Sally was of dark Lancastrian race, with handsome features and fine brown eyes. She had been a beauty ten years ago, and could still look comely, when her heart was up.

"My lady," she said, with her heart up now, at the hope of soon having a home of her own, and something to work for that she might keep; "such words should not pass the mouth wi'out bin meant."

What she said was very different in sound,

and not to be rendered in echo, by any one born far away from that country, where three dialects meet and find it hard to guess what each of the others is up to. Enough that this is what Sally meant to say, and that Mistress Yordas understood it.

"It is not my custom to say a thing without meaning it," she answered; "but unless it is taken up at once, it is likely to come to nothing. Where is your man Jack?"

"Jack is awaa to the minister to tell of us cooming tegither." Sally made no blush over this, as she might have done ten years ago.

"He must be an excellent and faithful man. He shall have the farm if he wishes it, and can give some security at going in. Let him come and see Jordas to-morrow."

After a few more words, the lady left Sally full of gratitude, very little of which was expressed aloud, and therefore the whole was more likely to work, as Mistress Yordas knew right well.

The farm was a better one than Wallhead, having some good barley-land upon it; and Jack did not fail to present himself at Scargate, upon the following morning. But the lady of the house did not think fit herself to

hold discourse with him. Jordas was bidden to entertain him, and find out how he stood in cash, and whether his character was solid; and then to leave him with a jug of ale; and come and report proceedings. The dogman discharged this duty well, being as faithful as the dogs he kept, and as keen a judge of human nature.

"The man hath no harm in him," he said, touching his hair to the ladies, as he entered the audit-room. "A' hath been knocked aboot a bit in them wars i' Injury, and hath only one hand left; but a' can lay it upon fifty poon, and get surety for anither fifty."

"Then tell him, Jordas, that he may go to Mr. Jellicorse to-morrow, to see about the writings, which he must pay for. I will write full instructions for Mr. Jellicorse, and you go and get your dinner; and then take my letter, that he may have time to consider it. Wait a moment. There are other things to be done in Middleton, and it would be late for you to come back to-night, the days are drawing in so. Sleep at our tea-grocer's; he will put you up. Give your letter at once into the hands of Mr. Jellicorse, and he will get forward with the writings. Tell this man

Jack that he must be there before twelve o'clock to-morrow, and then you can call about two o'clock, and bring back what there may be for signature; and be careful of it. Eliza, I think I have set forth your wishes."

"But, my lady, lawyers do take such a time; and who will look after Master Lancelot? I fear to have my feet two moiles off here—"

"Obey your orders, without reasoning; that is for those who give them. Eliza, I am sure that you agree with me. Jordas, make this man clearly understand, as you can do when you take the trouble. But you first must clearly understand the whole yourself. I will repeat it for you."

Philippa Yordas went through the whole of her orders again most clearly, and at every one of them the dogman nodded his large head distinctly, and counted the nods on his fingers to make sure; for this part is gifted with high mathematics. And the numbers stick fast like pegs driven into clay.

"Poor Jordas! Philippa, you are working him too hard. You have made great wrinkles in his forehead. Jordas, you must have no wrinkles, until you are married."

While Mrs. Carnaby spoke so kindly the dogman took his fingers off their numeral scale, and looked at her. By nature the two were first cousins, of half-blood; by law, and custom, and education, and vital institution, they were sundered more widely than black and white. But for all that, the dogman loved the lady, at a faithful distance.

"You seem to me now to have it clearly, Jordas," said the elder sister, looking at him sternly, because Eliza was so soft; "you will see that no mischief can be done with the dogs or horses, while you are away; and Mr. Jellicorse will give you a letter for me, to say that everything is right. My desire is to have things settled promptly, because your friend Jack has been to set the banns up; and the Church is more speedy in such matters than the law. Now the sooner you are off the better."

Jordas, in his steady but by no means stupid way, considered at his leisure what such things could mean. He knew all the property, and the many little holdings, as well as, and perhaps a great deal better than if they had happened to be his own. But he never had known such a hurry made before, or

such a special interest shown about the letting of any tenement, of perhaps tenfold the value. However, he said, like a sensible man (and therefore to himself only), that the ways of women are beyond compute, and must be suitably carried out, without any contradiction.

CHAPTER II.

AN OLD SOLDIER.

Now Mr. Jellicorse had been taking a careful view of everything. He wished to be certain of placing himself both on the righteous side and the right one; and in such a case this was not to be done without much circumspection. He felt himself bound to his present clients, and could not even dream of deserting them; but still there are many things that may be done to conciliate the adversary of one's friend, without being false to the friend himself. And some of these already were occurring to the lawyer.

It was true that no adversary had as yet appeared, nor even shown token of existence; but some little sign of complication had arisen, and one serious fact was come to light. The solicitors of Sir Ulphus de Roos

(the grandson of Sir Fursan, whose daughter had married Richard Yordas) had pretty strong evidence in some old letters, that a deed of appointment had been made by the said Richard, and Eleanor his wife, under the powers of their settlement. Luckily they had not been employed in the matter, and possessed not so much as a draft, or a letter of instructions; and now it was no concern of theirs to make, or meddle, or even move. Neither did they know that any question could arise about it; for they were a highly antiquated firm, of most rigid respectability, being legal advisers to the Chapter of York, and clerks of the Prerogative Court, and able to charge twice as much as almost any other firm, and nearly three times as much as poor Jellicorse.

Mr. Jellicorse had been most skilful and wary in sounding these deep and silent people; for he wanted to find out how much they knew, without letting them suspect that there was anything to know. And he proved an old woman's will gratis, or at least put it down to those who could afford it—because nobody meant to have it proved—simply for the sake of getting golden contact with Messrs.

Akeborum, Micklegate, and Brigant. Right craftily then did he fetch a young member of the firm, who delighted in angling, to take his holiday at Middleton, and fish the goodly Tees; and by gentle and casual discourse of gossip, in hours of hospitality, out of him he hooked and landed all that his firm knew of the Yordas race. Young Brigant thought it natural enough that his host, as the lawyer of that family, and their trusted adviser for five-and-twenty years, should like to talk over things of an elder date, which now could be little more than trifles of genealogical history. He got some fine fishing and good dinners, and found himself pleased with the river and the town, and his very kind host and hostess; and it came into his head that if Miss Emily grew up as pretty and lively as she promised to be, he might do worse than marry her, and open a connexion with such a fishing station. At any rate he left her as a "chose in action," which might be reduced into possession some fine day.

Such was the state of affairs when Jordas, after a long and muddy ride, sent word that he would like to see the master, for a minute or two, if convenient. The days were grown

short, and the candles lit, and Mr. Jellicorse was fast asleep, having had a good deal to get through that day, including an excellent supper. The lawyer's wife said, "Let him call in the morning. Business is over, and the office is closed. Susanna, your master must not be disturbed." But the master awoke, and declared that he would see him.

Candles were set in the study, while Jordas was having a trifle of refreshment; and when he came in, Mr. Jellicorse was there, with his spectacles on, and full of business.

"Asking of your pardon, sir, for disturbing of you now," said the dogman, with the rain upon his tarred coat shining, in a little course of drainage from his great brown beard, "my orders wur to lay this in your own hand, and seek answer to-morrow by dinner-time, if may be."

"Master Jordas, you shall have it, if it can be. Do you know anybody who can promise more than that?"

"Plenty, sir, to promise it, as you must know by this time; but never a body to perform so much as half. But craving of your pardon again, and separate, I wud foin spake a word or two of myself."

"Certainly, Jordas, I shall listen with great pleasure. A fine-looking fellow like you must have affairs. And the lady ought to make some settlement. It shall all be done for you at half-price."

"No, sir, it is none o' that kind of thing," the dogman answered, with a smile, as if he might have had such opportunities, but would trouble no lawyer about them; "and I get too much of half-price at home. It is about my ladies I desire to make speech. They keep their business too tight, master."

"Jordas, you have been well taught and trained; and you are a man of sagacity. Tell me faithfully what you mean. It shall go no further. And it may be of great service to your ladies."

"It is not much, Master Jellicoose; and you may make less than that of it. But a lie shud be met and knocked doon, sir, according to my opinion."

"Certainly, Jordas, when an action will not lie; and sometimes even where it does, it is wise to commit a defensible assault, and so to become the defendant. Jordas, you are big enough to do that."

"Master Jellicoose, you are a pleasant man; but you twist my maning, as a lawyer must. They all does it to keep their hand in. I am speaking of the stories, sir, that is so much about. And I think that my ladies should be told of them right out, and come forward, and lay their hands on them The Yordases always did wrong, of old time; but they never was afraid to jump on it."

"My friend, you speak in parables. What stories have arisen to be jumped upon?"

"Well, sir, for one thing, they do tell that the proper owner of the property is Sir Duncan, now away in India. A man hath come home who knows him well, and sayeth that he is like a Prince out there, with command of a country twice as big as Great Britain, and they up and made "Sir Duncan" of him, by his duty to the King. And if he cometh home, all must fall before him."

"Even the law of the land, I suppose, and the will of his own father. Pretty well, so far, Jordas! And what next?"

"Nought, sir, nought. But I thought I wur duty-bound to tell you that. What is women before a man Yordas?"

"My good friend, we will not despair. But you are keeping back something; I know it by your feet. You are duty-bound to tell me every word now, Jordas."

"The lawyers is the devil," said the dog-man to himself; and being quite used to this reflection, Mr. Jellicorse smiled and nodded; "but if you must have it all, sir, it is no more than this. Jack o' the Smithies, as is to marry Sally o' Will o' the Wallhead, is to have the lease of Shipboro' farm, and he is the man as hath told it all."

"Very well. We will wish him good luck with his farm," Mr. Jellicorse answered cheerfully; "and what is even rarer now-a-days, I fear, good luck of his wife, Master Jordas."

But as soon as the sturdy retainer was gone, and the sound of his heavy boots had died away, Mr. Jellicorse shook his head very gravely, and said, as he opened and looked through his packet, which confirmed the words of Jordas, "Sad indiscretion — want of legal knowledge — headstrong women — the very way to spoil it all! My troubles are beginning; and I had better go to bed."

His good wife seconded this wise resolve;

and without further parley it was put into effect, and proclaimed to be successful by a symphony of snores. For this is the excellence of having other people's cares to carry (with the carriage well paid), that they sit very lightly on the springs of sleep. That well-balanced vehicle rolls on smoothly, without jerk, or jar, or kick, so long as it travels over alien land.

In the morning, Mr. Jellicorse was up to anything, legitimate, legal, and likely to be paid for. Not that he would stir half the breadth of one wheat-corn, even for the sake of his daily bread, from the straight and strict line of integrity. He had made up his mind about that long ago, not only from natural virtue, strong and dominant as that was, but also by dwelling on his high repute, and the solid foundations of his character. He scarcely knew anybody, when he came to think of it, capable of taking such a lofty course; but that simply confirmed him in his stern resolve to do what was right and expedient.

It was quite one o'clock before Jack o' the Smithies rang the bell to see about his lease. He ought to have done it two hours sooner, if he meant to become a humble tenant; and

the lawyer, although he had plenty to do of other people's business, looked upon this as a very bad sign. Then he read his letter of instructions once more, and could not but admire the nice brevity of these, and the skilful style of hinting much, and declaring very little.

For after giving full particulars about the farm, and the rent, and the covenants required, Mistress Yordas proceeded thus,—

"The new tenant is the son of a former occupant, who proved to be a remarkably honest man, in a case of strong temptation. As happens too often with men of probity, he was misled and made bankrupt, and died about twelve years ago, I think. Please to verify this by reference. The late tenant was his nephew, and has never perceived the necessity of paying rent. We have been obliged to distrain, as you know; and I wish John Smithies to buy in what he pleases. He has saved some capital in India, where I am told that he fought most gallantly. Singular to say, he has met with, and perhaps served under, our lamented and lost brother Duncan, of whom and his family he may give us interesting particulars. You know how this

neighbourhood excels in idle talk, and if John Smithies becomes our tenant, his discourse must be confined to his own business. But he must not hesitate to impart to you any facts you may think it right to ask about. Jordas will bring us your answer, under seal."

"Skilfully put, up to that last word, which savours too much of teaching me my own business. Aberthaw, are you quite ready with that lease? It is wanted rather in a hurry."

As Mr. Jellicorse thought the former and uttered the latter part of these words, it was plain to see that he was fidgety. He had put on superior clothes to get up with; and the clerks had whispered to one another that it must be his wedding-day, and ought to end in a half-holiday all round, and be chalked thenceforth on the calendar; but instead of being joyful and jocular, like a man who feels a saving Providence over him, the lawyer was as dismal, and unsettled, and splenetic, as a prophet on the brink of wedlock. But the very last thing that he ever dreamed of doubting was his power to turn this old soldier inside out.

Jack o' the Smithies was announced at

last; and the lawyer, being vexed with him for taking such a time, resolved to let him take a little longer; and kept him waiting, without any bread and cheese, for nearly half an hour. The wisdom of doing this depended on the character of the man, and the state of his finances. And both of these being strong enough to stand, to keep him so long on his legs was unwise. At last he came in, a very sturdy sort of fellow, thinking no atom the less of himself, because some of his anatomy was honourably gone.

"Servant, sir," he said, making a salute; "I had orders to come to you about a little lease."

"Right, my man, I remember now. You are thinking of taking to your father's farm, after knocking about for some years in foreign parts. Ah, nothing like old England after all. And to tread the ancestral soil, and cherish the old associations, and to nurture a virtuous family in the fear of the Lord, and to be ready with the rent—"

"Rent is too high, sir; I must have five pounds off. It ought to be ten, by right. Cousin Joe has taken all out, and put nought in."

"John o' the Smithies, you astonish me. I have strong reason for believing that the rent is far too low. I have no instructions to reduce it."

"Then I must try for another farm, sir. I can have one of better land, under Sir Walter; only I seemed to hold on to the old place; and my Sally like to be under the old ladies."

"Old ladies! Jack, what are you come to? Beautiful ladies in the prime of life—but perhaps they would be old in India. I fear that you have not learned much behaviour. But at any rate you ought to know your own mind. Is it your intention to refuse so kind an offer, (which was only made for your father's sake, and to please your faithful Sally,) simply because another of your family has not been honest in his farming?"

"I never have took it in that way before," the steady old soldier answered, showing that rare phenomenon, the dawn of a new opinion upon a stubborn face. "Give me a bit to turn it over in my mind, sir. Lawyers be so quick, and so nimble, and all-corner'd."

"Turn it over fifty times, Master Smithies.

We have no wish to force the farm upon you. Take a pinch of snuff, to help your sense of justice. Or if you would like a pipe, go and have it in my kitchen. And if you are hungry, cook will give you eggs and bacon."

"No, sir; I am very much obliged to you. I never make much o' my thinking. I go by what the Lord sends right inside o' me, whenever I have decent folk to deal with. And spite of your cloth, sir, you have a honest look."

"You deserve another pinch of snuff for that. Master Smithies, you have a gift of putting hard things softly. But this is not business. Is your mind made up?"

"Yes, sir. I will take the farm, at full rent, if the covenants are to my liking. They must be on both sides, both sides, mind you."

Mr. Jellicorse smiled, as he began to read the draft prepared from a very ancient form which was firmly established on the Scargate Hall estates. The covenants, as usual, were all upon one side, the lessee being bound to a multitude of things, and the lessor to little more than acceptance of the rent. But such

a result is in the nature of the case. Yet Jack o' the Smithies was not well content. In him true Yorkshire stubbornness was multiplied by the dogged tenacity of a British soldier; and the aggregate raised to an unknown power by the efforts of shrewd ignorance; and at last the lawyer took occasion to say,—

"Master John Smithies, you are worthy to serve under the colours of a Yordas."

"That I have, sir, that I have," cried the veteran, taken unawares, and shaking the stump of his arm in proof; "I have served under Sir Duncan Yordas, who will come home some day and claim his own; and he won't want no covenants of me."

"You cannot have served under Duncan Yordas," Mr. Jellicorse answered, with a smile of disbelief, craftily rousing the pugnacity of the man; "because he was not even in the army of the Company, or any other army. I mean, of course, unless there was some other Duncan Yordas."

"Tell me!" Jack o' Smithies almost shouted; "Tell me about Duncan Yordas indeed! Who he was, and what he wasn't! And what do lawyers know of such things?

Why, you might have to command a regiment, and read covenants to them out there! Sir Duncan was not our Colonel, nor our Captain; but we was under his orders, all the more; and well he knew how to give them. Not one in fifty of us was white; but he made us all as good as white men; and the enemy never saw the colour of our backs. I wish I was out there again, I do, and would have stayed, but for being hoarse of combat; though the fault was never in my throat, but in my arm."

"There is no fault in your throat, John Smithies, except that it is a great deal too loud. I am sorry for Sally, with a temper such as yours."

"That shows how much you know about it. I never lose my temper, without I hearken lies. And for you to go and say that I never saw Sir Duncan—"

"I said nothing of the kind, my friend. But you did not come here to talk about Duncan, Captain, or Colonel, or Nabob, or Rajah, or whatever potentate he may be,—of him we desire to know nothing more,—a man who ran away, and disgraced his family, and killed his poor father, knows better than ever

to set his foot on Scargate land again. You talk about having a lease from him, a man with fifty wives, I dare say, and a hundred children! We all know what they are, out there."

There are very few tricks of the human face divine, more forcibly expressive of contempt than the lowering of the eyelids, so that only a narrow streak of eye is exposed to the fellow-mortal, and that streak fixed upon him steadfastly; and the contumely is intensified when (as in the present instance) the man who does it is gifted with yellow lashes on the under lid. Jack o' the Smithies treated Mr. Jellicorse to a gaze of this sort; and the lawyer, whose wrath had been feigned, to rouse the other's, and so extract full information, began to feel his own temper rise. And if Jack had known when to hold his tongue, he must have had the best of it. But the lawyer knew this, and the soldier did not.

"Master Jellicorse," said the latter, with his forehead deeply wrinkled, and his eyes now opened to their widest; "in saying of that you make a liar of yourself. Lease, or no lease—that you do. Leasing stands for lying

in the Bible, and a' seemeth to do the same thing in Yorkshire. Fifty wives, and a hundred children! Sir Duncan hath had one wife, and lost her, through the Neljan fever and her worry; and a Yorkshire lady, as you might know—and never hath he cared to look at any woman since. There now, what you make of that—you lawyers that make out every man a rake, and every woman a light o' love? Get along! I hate the lot o' you."

"What a strange character you are! You must have had jungle-fever, I should think. No, Diana, there is no danger"—for Jack o' the Smithies had made such a noise that Mrs. Jellicorse got frightened, and ran in; "this poor man has only one arm; and if he had two, he could not hurt me, even if he wished it. Be pleased to withdraw, Diana. John Smithies, you have simply made a fool of yourself. I have not said a word against Sir Duncan Yordas, or his wife, or his son"—

"He hath no son, I tell you; and that was partly how he lost his wife."

"Well, then, his daughters, I have said no harm of them."

"And very good reason—because he hath none. You lawyers think you are so clever; and you never know anything rightly. Sir Duncan hath himself alone to see to, and hundreds of thousands of darkies to manage, with a score of British bayonets. But he never heedeth of the bayonets, not he."

"I have read of such men, but I never saw them," Mr. Jellicorse said, as if thinking to himself; "I always feel doubt about the possibility of them."

"He hath ten elephants," continued Soldier Smithies, resolved to crown the pillar of his wonders, while about it; "ten great elephants, that come and kneel before him, and a thousand men ready to run to his thumb; and his word is law, better law than is in England, for scores and scores of miles on the top of hundreds."

"Why, did you come away, John Smithies? Why did you leave such a great prince, and come home?"

"Because it was home, sir. And for sake of Sally."

"There is some sense in that, my friend. And now if you wish to make a happy life for Sally, you will do as I advise you. Will you

take my advice? My time is of value; and I am not accustomed to waste my words."

"Well, sir, I will hearken to you. No man, that meaneth it, can say more than that."

"Jack o' the Smithies, you are acute. You have not been all over the world for nothing. But if you have made up your mind to settle, and be happy in your native parts, one thing must be attended to. It is a maxim of law, time-honoured and of the highest authority, that the tenant must never call in question the title of his landlord. Before attorning, you may do so; after that you are estopped, Now is it, or is it not your wish, to become the tenant of the Smithies farm, which your father held so honourably? Farm-produce is fetching great prices now; and if you refuse this offer, we can have a man, the day after to-morrow, who will give my ladies 10*l.* more, and who has not been a soldier, but a farmer all his life."

"Lawyer Jellicorse, I will take it; for Sally hath set her heart on it; and I know every crumple of the ground, better than the wisest farmer doth. Sir, I will sign the articles."

"The lease will be engrossed by next market-day; and the sale will be stopped,

until you have taken whatever you wish at a valuation. But remember what I said—you are not to go prating about this wonderful Sir Duncan, who is never likely to come home, if he lives in such grand state out there, and who is forbidden by his father's will from taking an acre of the property. And as he has no heirs, and is so wealthy, it cannot matter much to him."

"That is true," said the soldier; "but he might love to come home, as all our folk in India do; and if he doth, I will not deny him. I tell you fairly, Master Jellicorse."

"I like you for being an outspoken man, and true to those who have used you well. You could do him no good, and you might do harm to others, and unsettle simple minds, by going on about him among the tenants."

"His name hath never crossed my lips till now, and shall not again, without good cause. Here is my hand upon it, Master Lawyer."

The lawyer shook hands with him heartily, for he could not but respect the man for his sturdiness and sincerity. And when Jack was gone, Mr. Jellicorse played with his spectacles and his snuff-box for several minutes, before he could make up his mind how to deal with

the matter. Then hearing the solid knock of Jordas, who was bound to take horse for Scargate House pretty early at this time of year (with the weakening of the day among the mountains) he lost a few moments in confusion. The dogman could not go without any answer; and how was any good answer to be given in half an hour, at the utmost? A time had been when the lawyer studied curtness and precision under minds of abridgment in London. But the more he had laboured to introduce rash brevity into Yorkshire, and to cut away nine words out of ten, when all the ten meant one thing only—the more of contempt for his ignorance he won, and the less money he made out of it. And no sooner did he marry than he was forced to give up that, and, like a respectable butcher, put in every pennyweight of fat that could be charged for. Thus had he thriven, and grown, like a goodly deed of fine amplification; and if he had made Squire Philip's will now, it would scarcely have gone into any breast-pocket. Unluckily it is an easier thing to make a man's will than to carry it out, even though fortune be favourable.

In the present case, obstacles seemed to be

arising, which might at any moment require great skill and tact to surmount them; and the lawyer, hearing Jordas striding to and fro impatiently in the waiting-room, was fain to win time for consideration by writing a short note to say that he proposed to wait upon the ladies the very next day. For he had important news which it seemed expedient to discuss with them. In the mean time he begged them not to be at all uneasy; for his news upon the whole was propitious.

CHAPTER III.

JACK AND JILL GO DOWN THE GILL.

Upon a little beck that runs away into the Lune, which is a tributary of the Tees, there stood at this time a small square house of gray stone, partly greened with moss, or patched with drip, and opening to the sun with small dark windows. It looked as if it never could be warm inside, by sunshine or by fire-glow; and cared not, although it was the only house for miles, whether it were peopled, or stood empty. But this cold hard-looking place just now was the home of some hot and passionate hearts.

The people were poor; and how they made their living would have been a mystery to their neighbours, if there had been any. They rented no land, and they followed no trade, and they took no alms by hand or post; for

the begging-letter system was not yet invented, For the house itself they paid a small rent. which Jordas received on behalf of his ladies, and always found it ready; and that being so, he had nothing more to ask, and never meddled with them. They had been there before he came into office, and it was not his place to seek into their history; and if it had been, he would not have done it. For his sympathies were (as was natural and native to a man so placed) with all outsiders, and the people who compress into one or two generations that ignorance of lineage which some few families strive to defer for centuries; showing thereby unwise insistence, if latter-day theories are correct.

But if Master Jordas knew little of these people, somebody else knew more about them, and perhaps too much about one of them. Lancelot Carnaby, still called "Pet," in one of those rushes after random change, which the wildness of his nature drove upon him, had ridden his pony to a standstill on the moor, one sultry day of that August. No pity or care for the pony had he; but plenty of both for his own dear self. The pony might be left for the crows to pick his bones,

so far as mattered to Pet Carnaby; but it mattered very greatly to a boy like him, to have to go home upon his own legs. Long exertion was hateful to him, though he loved quick difficulty; for he was one of the many who combine activity with laziness. And while he was wondering what he should do, and worrying the fine little animal, a wave of the wind carried into his ear the brawling of a beck, like the humming of a hive. The boy had forgotten that the moor just here was broken by a narrow glen, engrooved with sliding water.

Now with all his strength, which was not much, he tugged the panting and limping little horse to the flat breach, and then down the steep of the gill, and let him walk into the water and begin to slake off a little of the crust of thirst. But no sooner did he see him preparing to rejoice in large crystal draughts (which his sobs had first forbidden) than he jerked him with the bit, and made a bad kick at him; because he could bear to see nothing happy. The pony had sense enough to reply, weary as he was, with a stronger kick, which took Master Lancelot in the knee, and discouraged him for any further contest. Bully as he was,

the boy had too much of ancient Yordas pith in him, to howl, or cry, or even whimper, but sat down on a little ridge, to nurse his poor knee, and meditate revenge against the animal with hoofs. Presently pain and wrath combined became too much for the weakness of his frame; and he fell back and lay upon the hard ground, in a fainting fit.

At such times, as everybody said (especially those whom he knocked about in his lively moments), this boy looked wonderfully lovely. His features were almost perfect; and he had long eyelashes like an Andalusian girl, and cheeks more exquisite than almost any doll's, a mouth of fine curve, and a chin of pert roundness, a neck of the mould that once was called "Byronic," and curly dark hair flowing all around, as fine as the very best peruque. In a word he was just what a boy ought not to be, who means to become an Englishman.

Such, however, was not the opinion of a creature even more beautiful than he, in the truer points of beauty. Coming with a pitcher for some water from the beck, Insie of the Gill, (the daughter of Bat and Zilpie of the Gill) was quite amazed, as she chanced

round a niche of the bank upon this image. An image fallen from the sun, she thought it, or at any rate from some part of heaven; until she saw the pony, who was testing the geology of the district by the flavour of its herbage. Then Insie knew that here was a mortal boy, not dead, but sadly wounded; and she drew her short striped kirtle down, because her shapely legs were bare.

Lancelot Carnaby coming to himself (which was a poor return for him), opened his large brown eyes, and saw a beautiful girl looking at him. As their eyes met, his insolent languor fell—for he generally awoke from these weak lapses into a slow persistent rage—and wonder and unknown admiration moved something in his nature that had never moved before. His words, however, were scarcely up to the high mark of the moment. "Who are you?" was all he said.

"I am called 'Insie of the Gill.' My father is Bat of the Gill, and my mother Zilpie of the Gill. You must be a stranger, not to know us."

"I never heard of you in all my life; although you seem to be living on my land. All the land about here belongs to

me; though my mother has it for a little time."

"I did not know," she answered softly, and scarcely thinking what she said, "that the land belonged to anybody, besides the birds, and animals. And is the water yours as well?"

"Yes; every drop of it, of course. But you are quite welcome to a pitcherful." This was the rarest affability of Pet; and he expected extraordinary thanks.

But Insie looked at him with surprise; "I am very much obliged to you," she said; "but I never asked any one to give it me, unless it is the beck itself; and the beck never seems to grudge it."

"You are not like anybody I ever saw. You speak very different from the people about here; and you look very different ten times over."

Insie reddened at his steadfast gaze, and turned her sweet soft face away. And yet she wanted to know more. "Different means a great many things. Do you mean that I look better, or worse?"

"Better of course; fifty thousand times better! Why, you look like a beautiful lady!

I tell you, I have seen hundreds of ladies; perhaps you haven't, but I have. And you look better than all of them."

"You say a great deal that you do not think," Insie answered quietly, yet turning round to show her face again; "I have heard that gentlemen always do; and I suppose that you are a young gentleman."

"I should hope so indeed. Don't you know who I am? I am Lancelot Yordas Carnaby."

"Why, you look quite as if you could stop the river," she answered with a laugh, though she felt his grandeur. "I suppose you consider me nobody at all. But I must get my water."

"You shall not carry water. You are much too pretty. I will carry it for you."

Pet was not "introspective;" otherwise he must have been astonished at himself. His mother and aunt would have doubted their own eyes, if they had beheld this most dainty of the dainty, and mischievous of the mischievous (with pain and passion for the moment vanquished), carefully carrying an old brown pitcher. Yet this he did, and wonderfully well, as he believed; though Insie only laughed to see him. For he had on the love-

liest gaiters in the world, of thin white buckskin with agate buttons, and breeches of silk, and a long brocaded waistcoat, and a short coat of rich purple velvet, also a riding hat, with a gray ostrich plume. And though he had very little calf inside his gaiters, and not much chest to fill out his waistcoat, and narrower shoulders than a velvet coat deserved, it would have been manifest, even to a tailor, that the boy had lineal, if not lateral, right to his rich habiliments.

Insie of the gill (who seemed not to be of peasant birth, though so plainly dressed), came gently down the steep brookside, to see what was going to be done for her.

She admired Lancelot, both for bravery of apparel and of action; and she longed to know how he would get a good pitcher of water, without any splash upon his clothes. So she stood behind a little bush, pretending not to be at all concerned, but amused at having her work done for her. But Pet was too sharp to play cat's-paw for nothing.

"Smile, and say 'thank you,'" he cried; "or I won't do it. I am not going up to my middle for nothing; I know that you want to laugh at me."

"You must have a very low middle," said Insie; "why, it never comes half way to my knees."

"You have got no stockings, and no new gaiters," Lancelot answered reasonably; and then like two children, they set to and laughed, till the gill almost echoed with them.

"Why, you're holding the mouth of the pitcher down stream!" Insie could hardly speak for laughing. "Is that how you go to fill a pitcher?"

"Yes, and the right way too," he answered; "the best water always comes up the eddies. You ought to be old enough to know that."

"I don't know anything at all; except that you are ruining your best clothes."

"I don't care twopence for such rubbish. You ought to see me on a Sunday, Insie; if you want to know what is good. There, you never drew such a pitcher as that. And I believe there is a fish in the bottom of it."

"Oh, if there is a fish, let me have him in my hands. I can nurse a fish on dry land, until he gets quite used to it. Are you sure that there is a little fish?"

"No, there is no fish; and I am soaking wet. But I never care what anybody thinks of me. If they say what I don't like, I kick them."

"Ah, you are accustomed to have your own way. That any one might know by looking at you. But I have got a quantity of work to do. You can see that by my fingers."

The girl made a curtsey, and took the pitcher from him, because he was knocking it against his legs; but he could not be angry when he looked into her eyes; though the habit of his temper made him try to fume.

"Do you know what I think?" she said, fixing bright hazel eyes upon him; "I think that you are very passionate sometimes."

"Well, if I am, it is my own business. Who told you anything about it? Whoever it was shall pay out for it."

"Nobody told me, sir. You must remember that I never even heard of your name before."

"Oh, come, I can't quite take down that. Everybody knows me for fifty miles or more; and I don't care what they think of me."

"You may please yourself about believing me," she answered, without concern about it.

"No one who knows me doubts my word; though I am not known for even five miles away."

"What an extraordinary girl you are! You say things on purpose to provoke me. Nobody ever does that; they are only too glad to keep me in a good temper."

"If you are like that, sir, I had better run away. My father will be home in about an hour; and he might think that you had no business here."

"I! No business upon my own land! This place must be bewitched, I think. There is a witch upon the moors, I know; who can take almost any shape; but—but they say she is three hundred years of age, or more."

"Perhaps, then, I am bewitched," said Insie; "or why should I stop to talk with you, who are only a rude boy after all, even according to your own account?"

"Well, you can go if you like. I suppose you live in that queer little place down there."

"The house is quite good enough for me, and my father, and mother, and brother Maunder. Good-bye; and please never to come here again."

"You don't understand me. I have made

you cry. Oh, Insie, let me have hold of your hand. I would rather make anybody cry than you. I never liked anybody so before."

"Cry, indeed! Who ever heard me cry? It is the way you splashed the water up. I am not in the habit of crying for a stranger. Good-bye, now; and go to your great people. You say that you are bad; and I fear it is too true."

"I am not bad at all. It is only what everybody says; because I never want to please them. But I want to please you! I would give anything to do it; if you would only tell me how."

The girl having cleverly dried her eyes, poured all their bright beauty upon him; and the heart of the youth was enlarged with a new, very sweet, and most timorous feeling. Then his dark eyes dropped, and he touched her gently; and only said, "Don't go away."

"But I must go away," Insie answered, with a blush, and a look as of more tears lurking in her eyes. "I have stopped too long; I must go away at once."

"But when may I come again? I will

hold you, and fight for you with everybody in the world; unless you tell me when to come again."

"Hush! I am quite ashamed to hear you talk so. I am a poor girl; and you a great young gentleman."

"Never mind that. That has nothing to do with it. Would you like to make me miserable, and a great deal more wicked than I ever was before? Do you hate me so much as all that, Insie?"

"No. You have been very kind to me. Only my father would be angry, I am sure; and my brother Maunder is dreadful. They all go away every other Friday, and that is the only free time I have."

"Every other Friday! What a long time, to be sure! Won't you come again for water, till this day fortnight?"

"Yes; I come for water three or four times every day. But if they were to see you, they would kill you first, and then lock me up for ever. The only wise plan is, for you to come no more."

"You cannot be thinking for a moment what you say. I will tell you what; if you don't come, I will march up to the house, and

beat the door in. The landlord can do that, according to law."

"If you care at all for me," said Insie, looking as if she had known him for ten years, "you will do exactly what I tell you. You will think no more about me for a fortnight; and then if you fancy that I can do you good, by advice about your bad temper, or by teaching you how to plait reeds for a hat, and how to fill a pitcher—perhaps I might be able to come down the gill again."

"I wish it was to-morrow. I shall count the days. But be sure to come early, if they go away all day. I shall bring my dinner with me; and you shall have the first help; and I will carve. But I should like one thing before I go; and it is the first time I ever asked anybody; though they ask me often enough, I can tell you."

"What would you like? You seem to me to be always wanting something."

"I should like very much—very much, indeed—just to give you one kiss, Insie."

"It cannot be thought of, for a moment," she replied; "and the first time of my ever seeing you, sir!"

Before he could reason in favour of a

privilege which goes proverbially by favour, the young maid was gone upon the winding path, with the pitcher truly balanced on her well-tressed head. Then Pet sat down and watched her; and she turned round in the distance, and waved him a kiss at decorous interval.

Not more than three days after this, Mrs. Carnaby came into the drawing-room, with a hasty step, and a web of wrinkles upon her generally smooth, white forehead.

"Eliza," asked her sister, "what has put you out so? That chair is not very strong, and you are rather heavy. Do you call that gracefully sinking on a seat, as we used to learn the way to do at school?"

"No, I do not call it anything of the kind. And if I am heavy, I only keep my heart in countenance, Philippa. You know not the anxieties of a mother."

"I am thankful to say that I do not. I have plenty of larger cares to attend to, as well as the anxieties of an aunt and sister. But what is this new maternal care?"

"Poor Pet's illness—his serious illness. I am surprised that you have not noticed it, Philippa; it seems so unkind of you."

"There cannot be anything much amiss with him. I never saw any one eat a better breakfast. What makes you fancy that the boy must be unwell?"

"It is no fancy. He must be very ill. Poor dear! I cannot bear to think of it. He has done no mischief for quite three days!"

"Then he must indeed be at the point of death. Oh, if we could only keep him always so, Eliza!"

"My dear sister, you will never understand him. He must have his little playful ways. Would you like him to be a milksop?"

"Certainly not. But I should like him first to be a manly boy, and then a boyish man. The Yordases always have been manly boys; instead of puling, and puking, and picking this, that, and the other."

"The poor child cannot help his health, Philippa. He never had the Yordas constitution. He inherits his delicate system from his poor dear gallant father."

Mrs. Carnaby wiped away a tear; and her sister (who never was hard to her) spoke gently, and said there were many worse boys than he, and she liked him for many

good and brave points of character, and especially for hating medicine.

"Philippa, you are right; he does hate medicine," the good mother answered, with a soft, sad sigh; "and he kicked the last apothecary in the stomach, when he made certain of its going down. But such things are trifles, dear, in comparison with now. If he would only kick Jordas, or Welldrum, or almost any one who would take it nicely, I should have some hope that he was coming to himself. But to see him sit quiet is so truly sad. He gets up a tree with his vast activity, and there he sits moping by the hour, and gazing in one fixed direction. I am almost sure that he has knocked his leg; but he flew into a fury when I wanted to examine it; and when I made a poultice, there was Saracen devouring it; and the nasty dog swallowed one of my lace handkerchiefs."

"Then surely you are unjust, Eliza, in lamenting all lack of mischief. But I have noticed things as well as you. And yesterday, I saw something more portentous than anything you have told me. I came upon Lancelot suddenly, in the last place where I should have looked for him. He was

positively in the library, and reading—reading a real book."

"A book, Philippa! Oh, that settles everything. He must have gone altogether out of his sane mind."

"Not only was it a book, but even a book of what people call poetry. You have heard of that bold young man over the mountains, who is trying to turn poetry upside down, by making it out of every single thing he sees; and who despises all the pieces that we used to learn at school. I cannot remember his name; but never mind. I thought that we ought to encourage him, because he might know some people in this neighbourhood; and so I ordered a book of his. Perhaps I told you; and that is the very book your learned boy was reading."

"Philippa, it seems to me impossible almost. He must have been looking at the pictures. I do hope he was only looking at the pictures."

"There is not a picture in the book of any sort. He was reading it, and saying it quite softly to himself; and I felt that if you saw him, you would send for Dr. Spraggs."

"Ring the bell at once, dear, if you will be

kind enough. I hope there is a fresh horse in the stable. Or the best way would be to send the jumping car; then he would be certain to come back at once."

"Do as you like. I begin to think that we ought to take proper precautions. But when that is done, I will tell you what I think he may be up the tree for."

A man with the jumping car was soon despatched, by urgency of Jordas, for Dr. Spraggs, who lived several miles away, in a hamlet to the westward, inaccessible to anything that could not jump right nimbly. But the ladies made a slight mistake: they caught the doctor, but no patient.

For Pet being well up in his favourite tree, poring with great wonder over "Lyrical Ballads," which took his fancy somehow—thence descried the hateful form of Dr. Spraggs, too surely approaching in the seat of honour of the jumping car. Was ever any poesy of such power as to elevate the soul above the smell of physic. The lofty poet of the lakes and fells, fell into Pet's pocket anyhow, and down the off-side of the tree came he, with even his bad leg ready to be foremost in giving leg-bail to the medical

man. The driver of the jumping car espied this action; but knowing that he would have done the like, grinned softly, and said nothing. And long after Dr. Spraggs was gone, leaving behind him sage advice, and a vast benevolence of bottles, Pet returned, very dirty and hungry, and cross, and most unpoetical.

CHAPTER IV.

YOUNG GILLY FLOWERS.

"DRUM," said Pet, in his free and easy style, about ten days after that escape, to a highly respected individual, Mr. Welldrum, the butler; "Drum, you have heard perhaps about my being poorly."

"Ay, that I have, and too much of it," replied the portly butler, busy in his office with inferior work, which he never should have had to do, if rightly estimated. "What you wants, Master Lancelot, is a little more of this here sort of thing—sleeves up—elbow grease—scrub away at hold ancient plate, and be blowed up if you puts a scratch on it; and the more you sweats, the less thanks you gets."

"Drum, when you come to be my butler, you shall have all the keys allowed you, and

walk about with them on a great gold ring, with a gold chain down to your breeches pocket. You shall dine when you like, and have it cooked on purpose, and order it directly after breakfast; and you shall have the very best hot-water plates; because you hate grease, don't you, Drum?"

"That I do; especial from young chaps, as wants to get something out of me."

"I am always as good as my word; come now."

"That you are, sir; and nothing very grand to say, considering the hepithets you applies to me sometimes. But you han't insulted me for three days now; and that proves to my mind that you can't be quite right."

"But you would like to see me better. I am sure you would. There is nobody so good to you as I am, Drum; and you are very crusty at times, you know. Your daughter shall be the head-cook; and then everything must be to your liking."

"Master Lancelot, you speaks fair. What can I have the honour of doing for you, sir, to set you up again in your poor dear 'ealth?"

"Well, you hate physic; don't you, Drum?

And you make a strict point of never taking it."

"I never knew no good to come out of no bottle, without it were a bottle of old crusted port wine. Ah! you likes that, Master Lancélot."

"I'll tell you what it is, Drum; I am obliged to be very careful. The reason why I don't get on, is from taking my meals too much in-doors. There is no fresh air in these old rooms. I have got a man who says—I could read it to you; but perhaps you don't care to hear poetry, Drum?" The butler made a face, and put the leather to his ears. "Very well, then; I am only just beginning; and it's like claret, you must learn to come to it. But from what he says, and from my own stomach, I intend to go and dine out of doors to-day."

"Lord! Master Lancelot, you must be gone clean daft. How ever could you have hot gravy, sir? And all the Yordases hates cold meat. Your poor dear grandfather—ah! he was a man."

"So am I. And I have got half-a-guinea. Now, Drum, you do just what I tell you; and mind, not a word to any one. It will be

the last coin you ever see of mine, either now, or in all my life, remember, if you let my mamma ever hear of it. You slip down to the larder and get me a cold grouse, and a cold partridge, and two of the hearthstone cakes, and a pat of butter, and a pinch of salt, and put them in my army-knapsack Aunt Philippa gave me; also a knife and fork and plate ; and let me see—what had I better have to drink ?"

"Well, sir, if I might offer an opinion, a pint bottle of dry port, or your grandfather's Madeira."

"Young ladies—young gentlemen I mean, of course—never take strong wines in the middle of the day. Bucellas, Drum—Bucellas is the proper thing. And when you have got it all together, turn the old cat into the larder, and get away cleverly by your little door, and put my knapsack in the old oak tree, the one that was struck by lightning. Now, do you understand all about it? It must all be ready in half an hour. And if I make a good dinner out on the moor, why, you might get another half-guinea before long." And with these words away strode Pet.

"Well, well!" the butler began muttering to himself; "what wickedness are you up to next? A lassie in his head, and his dear mammy thought he was sickening over his wisdom-teeth! He is beginning airly, and no mistake. But the gals are a coarse ugly lot about here"—Master Welldrum was not a Yorkshireman—"and the lad hath good taste in the matter of wine; although he is that contrairy, Solomon's self could not be upsides with him. Fall fair, fall foul, I must humour the boy; or out of this place I go, neck and crop."

Accordingly, Pet found all that he had ordered, and several little things which he had not thought of, especially a corkscrew and a glass; and forgetting half his laziness, he set off briskly, keeping through the trees where no window could espy him, and down a little side-glen, all a-foot: for it seemed to him safer to forego his pony.

The gill (or "ghyll," as the poet writes it), from which the lonely family that dwelt there took their name, was not upon the bridle-road from Scargate Hall towards Middleton, nor even within eye or reach of any road at all; but overlooked by kites alone, and tracked

with thoroughfare of nothing but the mountain streamlet. The four who lived there—"Bat, and Zilpie, Maunder, and Insie of the Gill"—had nothing to do with, and little to say to, any of the scatterling folk about them, across the blue distance of the moor. They ploughed no land, they kept no cattle, they scarcely put spade in the ground; except for about a fortnight in April, when they broke up a strip of alluvial soil new every season, and abutting on the brook; and there sowed or planted their vegetable crop, and left it to the clemency of heaven. Yet twice every year they were ready with their rent when it suited Master Jordas to come for it; since audits at the hall, and tenants' dinners were not to their liking. The rent was a trifle; but Jordas respected them highly for handing it done up in white paper, without even making him leave the saddle. How many paid less, or paid nothing at all, yet came to the dinners under rent reservation of perhaps one mark; then strictly reserved their rent, but failed not to make the most punctual and liberal marks, upon roast beef and plum pudding!

But while the worthy dogman got his little

bit of money, sealed up and so correct that (careful as he was) he never stopped now to count it, even his keen eyes could make nothing of these people, except that they stood upon their dignity. To him they appeared to be of gipsy race; or partly of wild, and partly perhaps of Lancastrian origin; for they rather "featured" the Lancashire, than the Yorkshire type of countenance, yet without any rustic coarseness, whether of aspect, voice, or manners. The story of their settlement in this glen had flagged out of memory of gossip, by reason of their calm obscurity; and all that survived was the belief that they were queer, and the certainty that they would not be meddled with.

Lancelot Yordas Carnaby was brave, both in the outward and the inward boy, when he struck into the gill from a trackless spread of moor, not far from the source of the beck that had shaped, or been shaped by this fissure. He had made up his mind to learn all about the water that filled sweet Insie's pitcher; and although the great poet of nature as yet was only in early utterance, some of his words had already touched Pet,

as he had never been touched before; but perhaps that fine effect was due to the sapping power of first love.

Yet first love, however it may soften and enlarge a petulant and wayward nature, instead of increasing, cuts short and crisp the patience of the patient. When Lancelot was as near, as manners and prudence allowed, to that lonesome house, he sat down quietly for a little while, in a little niche of scrubby bush, whence he could spy the door. For a short time this was very well; also it was well to be furnishing his mind with a form for the beautiful expressions in it, and prepare it for the order of their coming out. And when he was sure that these were well arranged, and could not fail at any crisis, he found a further pastime in considering his boots, then his gaiters, and small clothes (which were of lofty type), and his waistcoat elegant for anybody's bosom. But after a bit, even this began to pall; and when one of his feet went fast asleep, in spite of its beautiful surroundings, he jumped up and stamped, and was not so very far from hot words, as he should have been. For his habit was not so much to want a thing, as to get it before he wanted

it; which is very poor training for the trials of the love-time.

But just as he was beginning to resolve to be wise, and eat his victuals, now or never, and be sorry for any one who came too late—there came somebody by another track, whose step made the heart rise, and the stomach fall. Lancelot's mind began to fail him all at once; and the spirit, that was ready with a host of words, fluttered away into a quaking depth of silence. Yet Insie tripped along as if the world held no one, to cast a pretty shadow from the sun, beside her own.

Even the youngest girls are full of little tricks far beyond the oldest boy's comprehension. But the wonder of all wonders is, they have so pure a conscience as never to be thinking of themselves at all, far less of any one who thinks too much of them. "I declare, she has forgotten that she ever saw me!" Lancelot muttered to the bush in which he trembled. "It would serve her right, if I walked straight away." But he looked again, and could not help looking more than many times again, so piercing (as an ancient poet puts it) is the shaft from the

eyes of the female women. And Insie was especially a female girl—which has now ceased to be tautology—so feminine were her walk, and way, and sudden variety of unreasonable charm.

"Dear me! I never thought to see you any more, sir," said she, with a bright blush, perhaps at such a story, as Pet jumped out eagerly, with hands stretched forth. "It is the most surprising thing. And we might have done very well with rain-water."

"Oh, Insie! don't be so cold-hearted. Who can drink rain-water? I have got something very good for you indeed. I have carried it all the way myself; and only a strong man could have done it. Why, you have got stockings on, I declare; but I like you much better without them."

"Then, Master Lancelot Yordas Carnaby, you had better go home with all your good things."

"You are totally mistaken about that. I could never get these things into the house again, without being caught out to a certainty. It shows how little girls know of anything."

"A girl cannot be expected," she answered, looking most innocently at him, "to under-

stand anything sly or cunning. Why should anything of that sort be?"

"Well, if it comes to that," cried Pet, who (like all unreasonable people) had large rudiments of reasoning; "why should not I come up to your door, and knock, and say, 'I want to see Miss Insie; I am fond of Miss Insie, and have got something good for her'? That is what I shall do next time."

"If you do, my brother Maunder will beat you dreadfully—so dreadfully that you will never walk home. But don't let us talk of such terrible things. You must never come here, if you think of such things. I would not have you hurt for all the world; for sometimes I think that I like you very much."

The lovely girl looked at the handsome boy, as if they were at school together, learning something difficult; which must be repeated to the other's eyes, with a nod, or a shake of the head, as may be. A kind, and pure, and soft gaze she gave him; as if she would love his thoughts, if he could explain them. And Pet turned away, because he could not do so.

"I'll tell you what it is," he said bravely, while his heart was thrilling with desire to

speak well; "we will set to at once, and have a jolly good spread. I told my man to put up something very good; because I was certain that you would be very hungry."

"Surely you were not so foolish as to speak of me?"

"No, no, no; I know a trick worth two of that. I was not such a fool as to speak of you, of course. But—"

"But, I would never condescend to touch one bit. You were ashamed to say a word about me, then, were you?"

"Insie, now Insie, too bad of you it is. You can have no idea what those butlers and footmen are, if ever you tell them anything. They are worse than the maids; they go down stairs, and they get all the tit-bits out of the cook, and sit by the girl they like best; on the strength of having a secret about their master."

"Well, you are cunning!" cried the maiden with a sigh. "I thought that your nature was loftier than that. No, I do not know anything of butlers and footmen; and I think that the less I know of you the better."

"Oh, Insie, darling Insie, if you run away like that—I have got both your hands, and

you shall not run away. Do you want to kill me, Insie? They have had the doctor for me."

"Oh, how very dreadful! That does sound dreadful. I am not at all crying; and you need not look. But what did he say? Please to tell me what he said."

"He said, 'salts and senna.' But I got up a high tree. Let us think of nicer things. It is enough to spoil one's dinner. Oh, Insie, what is anything to eat or drink, compared with looking at you, when you are good? If I could only tell you the things that I have felt, all day and all night, since this day fortnight, how sorry you would be for having evil thoughts of me!"

"I have no evil thoughts; I have no thoughts at all. But it puzzles me to think what on earth you have been thinking. There, I will sit down, and listen for a moment."

"And I may hold one of your hands? I must, or you would never understand me. Why, your hands are much smaller than mine, I declare! And mine are very small; because of thinking about you. Now, you need not laugh—it does spoil everything, to

laugh so. It is more than a fortnight since I laughed at all. You make me feel so miserable. But would you like to know how I felt? Mind, I would rather cut my head off, than tell it to any one in the world but you."

"Now, I call that very kind of you; if you please, I should like to know how you have been feeling." With these words Insie came quite close up to his side; and looked at him so that he could hardly speak. "You may say it in a whisper, if you like," she said; "there is nobody coming for at least three hours; and so you may say it in a whisper."

"Then I will tell you; it was just like this. You know that I began to think how beautiful you were, at the very first time I looked at you. But you could not expect me so to love you all at once, as I love you now, dear Insie."

"I cannot understand any meaning in such things." But she took a little distance; quite as if she did.

"Well, I went away without thinking very much; because I had a bad place in my knee—a blue place bigger than the new half-crown, where you saw that the pony kicked me. I had him up, and thrashed him when I

got home; but that has got nothing to do with it—only that I made him know who was his master. And then I tried to go on with a lot of things as usual; but somehow I did not care at all. There was a great rat-hunt, that I had been thinking of more than three weeks, when they got the straddles down, to be ready for the new ricks to come instead. But I could not go near it; and it made them think that the whole of my inside was out of order. And it must have been. I can see by looking back; it must have been so, without my knowing it. I hit several people with my holly on their shins; because they knew more than I did. But that was no good; nor was anything else. I only got more and more out of sorts, and could not stay quiet anywhere; and yet it was no good to me, to try to make a noise. All day I went about, as if I did not care whether people contradicted me or not, or where I was, or what time I should get back, or whether there would be any dinner. And I tucked up my feet in my night-gown every night; but instead of stopping there, as they always used to do, they were down in cold places immediately; and instead of any sleep, I bit

holes by the hundred in the sheets, with thinking. I hated to be spoken to, and I hated everybody; and so I do now, whenever I come to think about them."

"Including even poor me, I suppose?" Insie had wonderfully pretty eyebrows, and a pretty way of raising them, and letting more light into her bright hazel eyes.

"No, I never seemed to hate you; though I often was put out, because I could never make your face come well. I was thinking of you always; but I could not see you. Now, tell me whether you have been like that."

"Not at all; but I have thought of you once or twice, and wondered what could make you want to come and see me. If I were a boy, perhaps I could understand it!"

"I hate boys; I am a man all over now. I am old enough to have a wife; and I mean to have you. How much do you suppose my waistcoat cost? Well, never mind, because you are not rich. But I have got money enough for both of us to live well; and nobody can keep me out of it. You know what a road is, I suppose—a good road leading to a town. Have you ever seen one? A brown place, with hedges on each side,

made hard and smooth for horses to go upon, and wheels that make a rumble. Well, if you will have me, and behave well to me, you shall sit up by yourself in a velvet dress, with a man before you and a man behind, and believe that you are flying."

"But what would become of my father, and my mother, and my brother Maunder?"

"Oh, they must stop here, of course. We shouldn't want them. But I would give them all their house rent-free, and a fat pig every Christmas. Now, you sit there, and spread your lap; that I may help you properly. I want to see you eat; you must learn to eat like a lady of the highest quality; for that you are going to be, I can tell you."

The beautiful maid of the gill smiled sweetly, sitting on the low bank with the grace of simple nature, and the playfulness of girlhood. She looked up at Lancelot, the self-appointed man, with a bright glance of curious contemplation; and contemplation (of any other subject than self) is dangerously near contempt. She thought very little of his large, free brag, of his patronizing manner, and fine self-content, reference of everything to his own standard, beauty too feminine,

and instead of female gentleness, highly cultivated waywardness. But in spite of all that she could not help liking, and sometimes admiring him, when he looked away. And now he was very busy with the high feast he had brought.

"To begin with," he said, when his good things were displayed; "you must remember that nothing is more vulgar, than to be hungry. A gentleman may have a tremendous appetite; but a lady never."

"But why, but why? That does seem foolish. I have read that the ladies are always helped first. That must be because of their appetites."

"Insie, I tell you things; not the reasons of them. Things are learned by seeing other people; and not by arguing about them."

"Then you had better eat your dinner first, and let me sit and watch you. And then I can eat mine by imitation; that is to say, if there is any left."

"You are one of the oddest people I have ever seen. You go round the corner of all that I say, instead of following properly. When we are married, you will always make

me laugh. At one time they kept a boy to make me laugh; but I got tired of him. Now I help you first; although I am myself so hungry. I do it from a lofty feeling, which my aunt Philippa calls 'chivalry.' Ladies talk about it, when they want to get the best of us. I have given you all the best part, you see; and I only keep the worst of it for myself."

If Pet had any hope that his self-denial would promptly be denied to him, he made a great mistake; for the damsel of the gill had a healthy moorland appetite, and did justice to all that was put before her; and presently he began, for the first time in his life, to find pleasure in seeing another person pleased. But the wine she would not even taste, in spite of persuasion and example; the water from the brook was all she drank, and she drank as prettily as a pigeon. Whatever she did was done gracefully and well.

"I am very particular," he said at last; "but you are fit to dine with anybody. How have you managed to learn it all? You take the best of everything, without a word about it, as gently as great ladies do. I thought that you would want me to eat the

nicest pieces; but instead of that, you have left me bones and drumsticks!"

He gave such a melancholy look at these, that Insie laughed quite merrily. "I wanted to see you practise chivalry;" she said.

"Well, never mind; I shall know another time. Instead of two birds I shall order four; and other things in proportion. But now I want to know about your father, and your mother. They must be respectable people, to judge by you. What is their proper name, and how much have they got to live upon?"

"More than you; a great deal more than you," she answered, with such a roguish smile, that he forgot his grievances, or began to lose them in the mist of beauty.

"More than me! And they live in such a hole, where only the crows come near them?"

"Yes, more than you, sir. They have their wits to live upon, and industry, and honesty."

Pet was not old enough yet in the world to say, "What is the use of all those? All their income is starvation." He was young enough to think that those who owned them had advantage of him; for he knew that he was very lazy. Moreover, he had heard of

such people getting on—through the striking power of exception, so much more brilliant than the rule—when all the blind virtues found luck to lead them. Industry, honesty, and ability always get on in story-books; and nothing is nicer than to hear a pretty story. But in some ways, Pet was sharp enough.

"Then they never will want that house rent-free, nor the fat pig, nor any other presents. Oh Insie, how very much better that will be! I find it so much nicer always to get things, than to give them. And people are so good-natured, when they have done it, and can talk of it. Insie, they shall give me something when I marry you; and as often as they like afterwards."

"They will give you something you will not like," she answered, with a laugh and a look along the moor, "if you stay here too long, chattering with me. Do you know what o'clock it is? I know always, whether the sun is out or in. You need show no gold watch to me."

"Oh, that comes of living in a draught all day. The out-door people grow too wise. What do you see about ten miles off? It must be ten miles to that hill."

"That hill is scarcely five miles off; and what I see is not half of that. I brought you up here, to be quite safe. Maunder's eyes are better than mine. But he will not see us, for another mile, if you cover your grand waistcoat; because we are in the shadows. Slip down into the gill again, and keep below the edge of it; and go home as fast as possible."

Lancelot felt inclined to do as he was told, and keep to safe obscurity. The long uncomfortable loneliness of prospect, and dim airy distance of the sinking sun, and deeply silent emptiness of hollows, where great shadows began to crawl—in the waning of the day, and so far away from home, all these united to impress upon a boy a spiritual influence, whose bodily expression would be the appearance of a clean pair of heels. But, to meet this sensible impulse, there arose the stubborn nature of his race, which hated to be told to do anything, and the dignity of his new-born love,—such as it was—and the thought of looking small.

"Why should I go?" he said; "I will meet them, and tell them that I am their landlord, and have a right to know all about them.

My grandfather never ran away from anybody. And they have got a donkey with them."

"They will have two, if you stop," cried Insie; although she admired his spirit. "My father is a very quiet man. But Maunder would take you by the throat, and cast you down into the beck."

"I should like to see him try to do it. I am not so very strong; but I am active as a cat. I have no idea of being threatened."

"Then will you be coaxed? I do implore you, for my sake, to go; or it will be too late. Never, never, will you see me again, unless you do what I beseech of you."

"I will not stir one peg, unless you put your arms round my neck and kiss me, and say that you will never have anybody else."

Insie blushed deeply, and her bright eyes flashed with passion, not of loving kind. But it went to her heart that he was brave, and that he loved her truly. She flung her comely arms round his neck and touched her rosy lips with his; and before he could clasp her he was gone, with no more comfort than hese words :—

"Now, if you are a gentleman you must go; and never come near this place again."

Not a moment too soon he plunged into the gill, and hurried up its winding course; but turning back at the corner, saw a sweet smile in the distance, and a wave of the hand, that warmed his heart.

CHAPTER V.

LOVE MILITANT.

So far so good. But that noble and exalted condition of the youthful mind, which is to itself pure wisdom's zenith, but to folk of coarse maturity and tough experience, "calf-love," superior as it is to words and reason, must be left to its own course. The settled resolve of a middle-aged man, with seven large-appetited children, and an eighth approaching the shores of light, while baby-linen too often transmitted betrays a transient texture, and hose has ripened into holes, and breeches verify their name, and a knock at the door knocks at the heart—the fixed resolution of such a man to strike a bold stroke, for the sake of his home, is worthier of attention than the flitting fancy of boy and girl, who pop upon one another, and skip

through zig-zag vernal ecstasy, like the weathery dalliance of gnats.

Lieutenant Carroway had dealt, and done with, amorous grace and attitude, soaring rapture, and profundity of sigh, suspense (more agonizing than suspension), despair, prostration, grinding of the teeth, the hollow and spectral laughter of a heart for ever broken, and all the other symptoms of an annual bill of vitality; and every new pledge of his affections sped him towards the pledge-shop. But never had he crossed that fatal threshold; the thought of his uniform and dignity prevailed; and he was not so mean as to send a child to do what the father was ashamed of.

So it was scarcely to be expected that even as a man he should sympathize deeply with the tender passion, and far less as a coastguardsman with the wooing of a smuggler. Master Robin Lyth, by this time, was in the contraband condition known to the authorities as love; Carroway had found out this fact, but instead of indulging in generous emotion, he made up his mind to nab him through it. For he reasoned as follows; and granting that reason has any business on such premises, the process does not seem amiss.

A man in love has only got one-eighth part of his wits at home, to govern the doings of his arms, legs, and tongue. A large half is occupied with his fancy, in all the wanderings of that creature, dreamy, flimsy, anchoring with gossamer, climbing the sky with steps of fog, cast into abysms (as great writers call it) by imaginary demons, and even at its best in a queer condition, pitiful, yet exceeding proud. A quarter of the mental power is employed in wanting to know what the other people think; an eighth part ought to be dwelling upon the fair distracting object; and only a small eighth can remain to attend to the business of the solid day. But in spite of all this, such lads get on, about as well as usual. If Bacchus has a protective power, Venus has no less of it, and possibly is more active, as behoves a female.

And surely it was a cold-blooded scheme, which even the Revenue should have excised from an honest scale of duties, to catch a poor fellow in the meshes of love; because he was too sharp otherwise. This, however, was the large idea ripening in the breast of Carroway.

"To-night I shall have him," he said to

his wife, who was inditing of softer things, her eighth confinement, and the shilling she had laid that it would be a boy this time; "the weather is stormy; yet the fellow makes love between the showers in a bare-faced way. That old fool of a tanner knows it, and has no more right feeling than if he were a boy. Aha, my Robin, fine robin as you are, I shall catch you piping with your Jenny Wren to-night!" The lieutenant shared the popular ignorance of simplest natural history.

"Charles, you never should have told me of it. Where is your feeling for the days gone by? And as for his coming between the showers, what should I have thought of you, if you had made a point of bringing your umbrella? My dear, it is wrong. And I beg you, for my sake, not to catch him with his true love, but only with his tubs."

"Matilda, your mind is weakened by the coming trial of your nerves. I would rather have him with his tubs, of course; they would set us up for several years, and his silks would come in for your churching. But everything cannot be as we desire. And he carries large pistols, when he is not courting. Do you wish me to be shot, Matilda?"

"Captain Carroway, how little thought you have, to speak to me in that way! And I felt before dinner that I never should get over it. Oh, who would have the smugglers on her mind, at such a time?"

"My dear, I beg your pardon. Pray exert your strength of mind, and cast such thoughts away from you—or perhaps it will be a smuggler. And yet if it were, how much better it would pay!"

"Then I hope it will, Charles; I heartily hope it will be. It would serve you quite right to be snaring your own son, after snaring a poor youth through his sweetheart."

"Well, well, time will show. Put me up the flat bottle, Tilly, and the knuckle of pork that was left last night. Goodness knows when I shall be back; and I never like to rack my mind upon an empty stomach."

The revenue-officer had far to go, and was wise in providing provender. And the weather being on the fall towards the equinox, and the tides running strong and uncertain, he had made up his mind to fare inland, instead of attempting the watery ways. He felt that he could ride, as every sailor

always feels; and he had a fine horse upon hire from his butcher, which the king himself would pay for. The inferior men had been sent ahead on foot, with orders to march along and hold their tongues. And one of these men was John Cadman, the self-same man who had descended the cliff without any footpath. They were all to be ready, with hanger and pistol, in a hole towards Byrsa Cottage.

Lieutenant Carroway enjoyed his ride. There are men to whom excitement is an elevation of the sad and slow mind, which otherwise seems to have nothing to do. And what finer excitement can a good mind have than in balancing the chances of its body tumbling out of the saddle, and evicting its poor self?

The mind of Charles Carroway was wide awake to this, and tenderly anxious about the bad foot in which its owner ended—because of the importance of the stirrups—and all the sanguine vigour of the heart, (which seemed to like some thumping,) conveyed to the seat of reason little more than a wish to be well out of it. The brave lieutenant holding place, and sticking to it through a

sense of duty, and of the difficulty of getting off, remembered to have heard, when quite a little boy, that a man who gazes steadily between his horse's ears cannot possibly tumble off the back. The saying in its wisdom is akin to that which describes the potency of salt upon a sparrow's tail.

While Carroway gloomily pounded the road, with reflection a dangerous luxury; things of even deeper interest took their course at the goal of his endeavours. Mary Anerley, still at exile in the house of the tanner, by reason of her mother's strict coast-guard, had long been thinking that more injustice is done in the world than ought to be; and especially in the matter of free-trade, she had imbibed lax opinions, which may not be abhorrent to a tanner's nature, but were most unbecoming to the daughter of a farmer orthodox upon his own land, and an officer of King's Fencibles. But how did Mary make this change, and upon questions of public policy chop sides, as quickly as a clever journal does? She did it in the way in which all women think, whose thoughts are of any value, by allowing the heart to go to work, being the more active organ, and create large

scenery, into which the tempted mind must follow. To anybody whose life has been saved by anybody else, there should arise not only a fine image of the preserver, but a high sense of the service done to the universe, which must have gone into deepest mourning if deprived of N°· one. And then, almost of necessity, succeeds the investment of this benefactor to the world at large with all the great qualities, needed for an exploit so stupendous. He has done a great deed, he has proved himself to be gallant, generous, magnanimous; shall I, who exist through his grand nobility, listen to his very low enemies? Therefore Robin was an angel now, and his persecutors must be demons.

Captain Lyth had not been slow to enter into his good luck. He knew that Master Popplewell had a cultivated taste for rare old Schnapps, while the partner of his life, and labour, and repose, possessed a desire for the finer kinds of lace. Attending to these points he was always welcome; and the excellent couple encouraged his affection and liberal good-will towards them. But Mary would accept no presents from him, and behaved for a long time very strangely, and as

if she would rather keep out of his way. Yet he managed to keep on running after her, as much as she managed to run away; for he had been down now into the hold of his heart, searching it with a dark lantern, and there he had discovered "Mary," "Mary," not only branded on the hullage of all things, but the pith and pack of everything; and without any fraud upon charter-party, the cargo entire was "Mary."

Who can tell what a young maid feels, when she herself is doubtful? Somehow she has very large ideas, which only come up when she begins to think; and too often, after some very little thing, she exclaims that all is rubbish. The key-note of her heart is high, and a lot of things fall below harmony, and notably (if she is not a stupe), some of her own dear love's expressions before she has made up her soul to love him. This is a hard time for almost any man, who feels his random mind dipped into, with a spirit-gauge, and a saccharometer. But in spite of all these indications, Robin Lyth stuck to himself; which is the right way to get credit for sticking.

"Johnny, my dear," said Deborah Popple-

well to her valued husband, just about the time when bold Carroway was getting hot and sore upon the Filey Road, yet steadily enlarging all the penance of return; "things ought to be coming to a point, I think. We ought not to let them so be going on for ever. Young people like to be married in the spring; the birds are singing, and the price of coal goes down. And they ought to be engaged six months at least. We were married in the spring, my dear, the Tuesday but one that comes next from Easter-day. There was no lilac out, but there ought to have been, because it was not sunny. And we have never repented it, you know."

"Never as long as I live shall I forget that day," said Popplewell; "they sent me home a suit of clothes as were made for kidney-beansticks. I did want to look nice at church, and crack, crack, crack they went, and out came all the lining. Debby, I had good legs in those days, and could crunch down bark like brewer's grains."

"And so you could now, my dear, every bit as well. Scarcely any of the young men have your legs. How thankful we ought to be for them—and teeth! But everything

seems to be different now, and nobody has any dignity of mind. We sowed broad beans, like a pigeon's foot-tread, out and in, all the way to church."

"The folk can never do such things now; we must not expect it of such times, my dear. Five and forty years ago was ninety times better than these days, Debby, except that you and I was steadfast, and mean to be so to the end, God willing. Lord! what are the lasses that He makes now?"

"Johnny, they try to look their best; and we must not be hard upon them. Our Mary looks well enow, when she hath a colour; though my eyes might a' been a brighter blue, if I never hadn't took to spectacles. Johnny, I am sure a'most that she is in her love-time. She crieth at night, which is nobody's business; the strings of her nightcap run out of their starch; and there looks like a channel on the pillow, though the sharp young hussy turns it upside down. I shall be upsides with her, if you won't."

"Certainly it shall be left to you; you are the one to do it best. You push her on, and I will stir him up. I will smuggle some schnapps into his tea to-night, to make him

look up bolder; as mild as any milk it is. When I was taken with your cheeks, Debby, and your bit of money, I was never that long in telling you."

"That's true enow, Johnny, you was sarcy. But I'm thinking of the trouble we may get into, over at Anerley about it."

"I'll carry that, lass. My back's as broad as Stephen's. What more can they want for her than a fine young fellow, a credit to his business and the country? Lord! how I hate them rough coast-riders; it wouldn't be good for them to come here."

"Then they are here, I tell you, and much they care. You seem to me to have shut your eyes since ever you left off tanning. How many times have I told you, John, that a sneaking fellow hath got in with Sue? I saw him with my own eyes last night skulking past the wicket-gate; and the girl's addle-pate is completely turned. You think her such a wonder, that you won't hearken. But I know the women best, I do."

"Out of this house she goes, neck and crop, if what you say is true, Deb. Don't say it again, that's a kind, good soul; it spoils my pipe to think of it."

Towards sundown Robin Lyth appeared, according to invitation. Dandy as he generally was, he looked unusually smart this time, with snow-white ducks, and a velvet waistcoat, pumps like a dressing-glass, lace to his shirt, and a blue coat with gold buttons. His keen eyes glanced about for Mary, and sparkled as soon as she came down; and when he took her hand, she blushed, and was half afraid to look at him; for she felt in her heart that he meant to say something, if he could find occasion; but her heart did not tell her what answer she would make, because of her father's grief and wrath; so she tried to hope that nothing would be said, and she kept very near her good aunt's apron-string. Such tactics, however, were doomed to defeat. The host and hostess of Byrsa Cottage were very proud of the tea they gave to any distinguished visitor. Tea was a luxury, being very dear, and although large quantities were smuggled, the quality was not, like that of other goods so imported, equal or superior to the fair legitimate staple. And Robin, who never was shy of his profession, confessed that he could not supply a cup so good.

"You shall come and have another out of doors, my friend," said his entertainer graciously; "Mary, take the captain's cup to the bower; the rain has cleared off, and the evening will be fine. I will smoke my pipe, and we will talk adventures. Things have happened to me that would make you stare, if I could bring myself to tell them. Ah, yes, I have lived in stirring times. Fifty years ago, men and women knew their minds; and a dog could eat his dinner without a damask napkin."

Master Popplewell, who was of a good round form, and tucked his heels over one another as he walked (which indicates a pleasant self-esteem), now lit his long pipe and marched ahead, carefully gazing to the front and far away; so that the young folk might have free-boot and free-hand behind him. That they should have flutters of loving-kindness, and crafty little breaths of whispering, and extraordinary gifts of just looking at each other in time not to be looked at again, as well as a strange sort of in and out of feeling, as if they were patterned with [illegible]—as the famous Hereford-[illegible]e—and above all the rest,

that they should desire to have no one in the world to look at them, was to be expected by a clever old codger, a tanner who had realized a competence, and eaten many "tanner's pies." The which is a good thing; and so much the better, because it costs nothing save the crust and the coal. But instead of any pretty little goings on, such as this worthy man made room for—to tell the stupid truth, this lad and lass came down the long walk as far apart, and as independent of one another as two stakes of an espalier. There had not been a word gone amiss between them, nor even a thought the wrong way of the grain; but the pressure of fear, and of prickly expectation, was upon them both, and kept them mute. The lad was afraid that he would get "nay;" and the lass was afraid that she could not give it.

The bower was quite at the end of the garden, through and beyond the pot-herb part, and upon a little bank which overhung a little lane. Here in this corner a good woman had contrived what women nearly always understand the best, a little nook of pleasure and of perfume, after the rank ranks of the kitchen-stuff. Not that these are to

be disdained; far otherwise, they indeed are the real business, and herein lies true test of skill. But still the flowers may declare that they do smell better. And not only were there flowers here, and little shrubs planted sprucely, but also good grass; which is always softness, and soothes the impatient eyes of men. And on this grass there stood, or hung, or flowered, or did whatever it was meant to do, a beautiful weeping ash, the only one anywhere in that neighbourhood.

"I can't look at skies, and that—have seen too many of them. You young folk, go and chirp under the tree. What I want is a little rum and water."

With these words the tanner went into his bower, where he kept a good store of materials in moss; and the plaited ivy of the narrow entrance shook with his voice, and steps, and the decision of his thoughts. For he wanted to see things come to a point, and his only way to do it was to get quite out of sight. Such fools the young people of the age were now!

While his thoughts were such, or scarcely any better, his partner in life came down the walk, with a heap of little things which she

thought needful for the preservation of the tanner; and she waddled a little and turned her toes out, for she as well was roundish.

"Ah, you ought to have Sue. Where is Sue?" said Master Popplewell. "Now come you in out of the way of the wind, Debby; you know how your back-sinew ached with the darning before last wash."

Mrs. Popplewell grumbled, but obeyed; for she saw that her lord had his reasons. So Mary and Robin were left outside, quite as if they were nothing to any but themselves. Mary was aware of all this manœuvring, and it brought a little frown upon her pretty forehead, as if she were cast before the feet of Robin Lyth; but her gentleness prevailed, because they meant her well. Under the weeping ash there was a little seat, and the beauty of it was that it would not hold two people. She sat down upon it, and became absorbed in the clouds that were busy with the sunset.

These were very beautiful, as they so often are in the broken weather of the autumn; but sailors would rather see fair sky, and Robin's fair heaven was in Mary's eyes. At these he gazed with a natural desire to learn what the

symptoms of the weather were; but it seemed as if little could be made out there, because everything seemed so lofty; perhaps Mary had forgotten his existence.

Could any lad of wax put up with this, least of all a daring mariner? He resolved to run the cargo of his heart right in, at the risk of all breakers and drawn cutlasses; and to make a good beginning he came up and took her hand. The tanner in the bower gave approval with a cough, like Cupid with a sneeze; then he turned it to a snore.

"Mary, why do you carry on like this?" the smuggler inquired in a very gentle voice. "I have done nothing to offend you, have I? That would be the last thing I would ever do."

"Captain Lyth, you are always very good, you never should think such things of me. I am just looking at a particular cloud. And who ever said that you might call me 'Mary'?"

"Perhaps the particular cloud said so; but you must have been the cloud yourself; for you told me only yesterday."

"Then I will never say another word about it; but people should not take advantage."

"Who are people? How you talk, quite as if I were somebody you never saw before! I should like you just to look round now; and let me see why you are so different from yourself."

Mary Anerley looked round; for she always did what people liked, without good reason otherwise; and if her mind was full of clouds, her eyes had little sign of them.

"You look as lovely as you always do;" said the smuggler, growing bolder as she looked at something else. "You know long ago what my opinion of you is; and yet you seem to take no notice. Now I must be off, as you know, to-night; not for any reason of my own, as I told you yesterday, but to carry out a contract. I may not see you for many months again; and you may fall in love with a Preventive man."

"I never fall in love with anybody. Why should I go from one extreme to the other? Captain Carroway has seven children, as well as a very active wife."

"I am not afraid of Carroway, in love, or in war. He is an honest fellow, with no more brains than this ash-tree over us. I mean the dashing captains who come in with

their cutters, and would carry you off as soon as look."

"Captain Lyth, you are not at all considering what you say; those officers do not want me—they want you."

"Then they shall get neither; they may trust me for that. But, Mary, do tell me how your heart is; you know well how mine has been for ever such a time. I tell you downright that I have thought of girls before—"

"Oh, I was not at all aware of that; surely you had better go on with thinking of them."

"You have not heard me out. I have only thought of them; nothing more than thinking, in a foolish sort of way. But of you I do not think; I seem to feel you all through me."

"What sort of a sensation do I seem to be? A foolish one, I suppose, like all those many others."

"No, not at all. A very wise one; a regular knowledge that I cannot live without you; a certainty that I could only mope about a little—"

"And not run any more cargoes on the coast?"

"Not a single tub, nor a quarter-bale of silk; except, of course, what is under contract now; and, if you should tell me that you cannot care about me—"

"Hush! I am almost sure that I hear footsteps. Listen, just a moment."

"No, I will not listen to any one in the world, but you. I beg you not to try to put me off. Think of the winter, and the long time coming; say if you will think of me. I must allow that I am not like you of a respectable old family. The Lord alone knows where I came from, or where I may go to. My business is a random and up-and-down one; but no one can call it disreputable; and if you went against it, I would throw it up. There are plenty of trades that I can turn my hand to; and I will turn it to anything you please, if you will only put yours inside it. Mary, only let me have your hand; and you need not say anything unless you like."

"But I always do like to say something; when things are brought before me so. I have to consider my father, and my mother, and others belonging to me. It is not as if I were all alone, and could do exactly as I pleased. My father bears an ill-will towards

free-trade; and my mother has made bad bargains, when she felt sure of very good ones."

"I know that there are rogues about," Robin answered, with a judicial frown; "but foul play never should hurt fair play; and we haul them through the water when we catch them. Your father is terribly particular, I know, and that is the worst thing there can be; but I do not care a groat for all objections, Mary; unless the objection begins with you. I am sure by your eyes, and your pretty lips and forehead, that you are not the one to change. If once any lucky fellow wins your heart, he will have it—unless he is a fool—for ever. I can do most things, but not that; or you never would be thinking about the other people. What would anybody be to me in comparison with you, if I only had the chance? I would kick them all to Jericho. Can you see it in that way? Can you get hot every time you think of me?"

"Really," said Mary, looking very gently at him, because of his serious excitement; "you are very good, and very brave, and have done wonders for me; but why should I get hot?"

"No, I suppose it is not to be expected.

When I am in great peril, I grow hot, and tingle, and am alive all over. Men of a loftier courage grow cold; it depends upon the constitution; but I enjoy it more than they do, and I can see things ten times quicker. Oh, how I wish I was Nelson; how he must enjoy himself!"

"But if you have love of continual danger and eagerness to be always at it," said Mary, with wide Yorkshire sense, much as she admired this heroic type; "the proper thing for you to do is to lead a single life. You might be enjoying all the danger very much; but what would your wife at home be doing? Only to knit, and sigh, and lie awake."

Mary made a bad hit here. This picture was not at all deterrent; so daring are young men, and so selfish.

"Nothing of that sort should ever come to pass," cried Robin, with the gaze of the head of a household; "supposing only that my wife was you. I would be home regularly every night, before the kitchen clock struck eight. I would always come home with an appetite, and kiss you, and do both my feet upon the scraper. I would ask how the baby was, and carry him about, and go 'one, two, three,' as

the nurses do. I would quite leave the Government to put on taxes, and pay them—if I could—without a word of grumble; I would keep every rope about the house in order, as only a sailor knows how to do, and fettle my own mending, and carry out my orders, and never meddle with the kitchen; at least unless my opinion was sought for, concerning any little thing that might happen to be meant for me."

"Well," exclaimed Mary; "you quite take my breath away; I had no idea that you were so clever. In return for all these wonders, what should poor I have to do?"

"Poor I would only have to say just once, 'Robin, I will have you, and begin to try to love you.'"

"I am afraid that it has been done long ago; and the thing that I ought to do is to try and help it."

What happened upon this it would be needless to report, and not only needless but a vast deal worse—shabby, interloping, meddlesome and mean, undignified, unmanly, and disreputably low; for even the tanner and his wife, (who must have had right to come forward, if anybody had,) felt that their right

was a shadow, and kept back, as if they were a hundred miles away, and took one another by the hand and nodded, as much as to say, "You remember how we did it; better than that, my dear. Here is your good health."

This being so, and the time so sacred to the higher emotions, even the boldest intruder should endeavour to check his ardour for intrusion. Without any inkling of Preventive Force, Robin and Mary having once done away with all that stood between them, found it very difficult to be too near together; because of all the many things that each had for to say. They seemed to get into an unwise condition of longing to know matters that surely could not matter. When did each of them first feel sure of being meant only for the other nobler one? At first sight, of course, and with a perfect gift of seeing how much loftier each was than the other; and what an extraordinary fact it was that in everything imaginable they were quite alike, except in the palpable certainty possessed by each of the betterness of the other. What an age it seemed since first they met, positively without thinking, and in the very middle of a skirmish, yet with a re-

markable drawing out of perceptions one anotherward! Did Mary feel this, when she acted so cleverly, and led away those vile pursuers; and did Robin, when his breath came back, discover why his heart was glowing in the rabbit-hole? Questions of such depth cannot be fathomed in a moment; and even to attempt to do any justfce to them, heads must be very long laid together. Not only so, but also it is of prime necessity to make sure that every whisper goes into the proper ear, and abides there only, and every subtlety of glance, and every nicety of touch gets warm with exclusive reciprocity. It is not too much to say that in so sad a gladness, the faculties of self-preservation are weak, when they ought to be most active; therefore it should surprise nobody (except those who are far above all surprise,) to become aware that every word they said and everything (even doubly sacred) that they did, was well entered into, and thoroughly enjoyed, by a liberal audience of family-minded men, who had been through pretty scenes like this, and quietly enjoyed dry memory.

Cadman, Ellis, and Dick Hackerbody were in comfortable places of retirement, just under

the combing of the hedge; all waiting for a whistle, yet at leisure to enjoy the whisper, the murmur, or even the sigh, of a genuine piece of "sweet-hearting." Unjust as it may be, and hard, and truly narrow, there does exist in the human mind, or at least in the masculine half of it, a strong conviction that a man in love is a man in a scrape, in a hole, in a pitfall, in a pitiful condition, untrue for the moment to the brotherhood of man, and cast down among the inferior vessels. And instead of being sorry for him, those who are all right look down, and glory over him, with very ancient gibes. So these three men, instead of being touched at heart by soft confessions, laid hard hands to wrinkled noses.

"Mary, I vow to you, as I stand here," said Robin for the fiftieth time, leading her nearer to the treacherous hedge, as he pressed her trembling hand, and gazed with deep ecstasy into her truthful eyes; "I will live only to deserve you, darling. I will give up everything, and everybody, in the world, and start afresh. I will pay king's duty upon every single tub; and set up in the tea and spirit line, with his Majesty's arms upon the lintel. I will take a large contract for the

royal navy, who never get anything genuine, and not one of them ever knows good from bad—"

"That's a dirty lie, sir. In the king's name I arrest you."

Lieutenant Carroway leaped before them, flourishing a long sword, and dancing with excitement, in this the supreme moment of his life. At the same instant, three men came bursting through the hedge, drew hangers, and waited for orders. Robin Lyth, in the midst of his love, was so amazed, that he stood like a boy under orders to be caned.

"Surrender, sir! Down with your arms, you are my prisoner. Strike to his majesty. Hands to your side! or I run you through like Jack Robinson! Keep back, men. He belongs to me."

But Carroway counted his chicks too soon; or at any rate he overlooked a little chick. For while he was making fine passes (having learned the rudiments of swordsmanship beyond other British officers), and just as he was executing a splendid flourish, upon his bony breast lay Mary. She flung her arms round him, so that move he could not without grievously tearing her; and she managed,

in a very wicked way, to throw the whole weight of two bodies on his wounded heel. A flash of pain shot up to his very sword; and down he went with Mary to protect him, or at any rate to cover him. His three men, like true Britons, stood in position, and waited for their officer to get up and give orders.

These three men showed such perfect discipline, that Robin was invited to knock them down, as if they had simply been three skittles in a row; he recovered his presence of mind and did it; and looking back at Mary, received signal to be off. Perceiving that his brave love would take no harm—for the tanner was come forth blustering loudly, and Mrs. Popplewell with shrieks and screams enough to prevent the whole Preventive Service—the free-trader kissed his hand to Mary, and was lost through the bushes, and away into the dark.

CHAPTER VI.

LOVE PENITENT.

"I TELL you, Captain Anerley, that she knocked me down. Your daughter there, who looks as if butter would not melt in her mouth, knocked down Commander Carroway of his Majesty's Coast-guard, like a royal Bengal tiger, sir. I am not come to complain; such an action I would scorn; and I admire the young lady for her spirit, sir. My sword was drawn, no man could have come near me; but before I could think, sir, I was lying on my back. Do you call that constitutional?"

"Mary, lof, how ever could you think it—to knock down Captain Carroway?"

"Father, I never did. He went down of himself, because he was flourishing about so. I never thought what I was doing of at all. And with all my heart I beg his pardon.

What right had you, sir, to come spying after me?"

This interview was not of the common sort. Lieutenant Carroway, in full uniform, was come to Anerley Farm that afternoon; not for a moment to complain of Mary, but to do his duty, and to put things straight; while Mary had insisted upon going home at once from the hospitable house of Uncle Popplewell, who had also insisted upon going with her, and taking his wife to help the situation.

A council had been called immediately, with Mistress Anerley presiding; and before it had got beyond the crying stage, in marched the brave lieutenant.

Stephen Anerley was reserving his opinion —which generally means that there is none yet to reserve—but in his case there would be a great deal by-and-by. Master Popplewell had made up his mind and his wife's, long ago, and confirmed it in the one-horse shay, while Mary was riding "Lord Keppel" in the rear; and the mind of the tanner was as tough as good oak-bark. His premises had been intruded upon—the property which he had bought with his own money saved by years of honest trade, his private garden, his

ornamental bower, his wife's own pleasure-plot, at a sacred moment, invaded, trampled, and outraged by a scurvy preventive-man and his low crew! The first thing he had done to the prostrate Carroway was to lay hold of him by the collar, and shake his fist at him and demand his warrant—a magistrate's warrant, or from the Crown itself. The poor lieutenant having none to show, "Then I will have the law of you, sir," the tanner shouted; "if it costs me two hundred and fifty pounds. I am known for a man, sir, who sticks to his word; and my attorney is a genuine bull-dog."

This had frightened Carroway more than fifty broadsides. Truly he loved fighting; but the boldest sailor bears away, at prospect of an action-at-law. Popplewell saw this, and stuck to his advantage, and vowed, until bed-time, satisfaction he would have; and never lost the sight of it, until he fell asleep.

Even now it was in his mind, as Carroway could see; his eyebrows meant it, and his very surly nod, and the way in which he put his hands far down into his pockets. The poor lieutenant, being well aware that zeal had exceeded duty (without the golden am-

nesty of success), and finding out that Popplewell was rich and had no children, did his very best to look with real pleasure at him, and try to raise a loftier feeling in his breast than damages. But the tanner only frowned, and squared his elbows, and stuck his knuckles sharply out of both his breeches' pockets. And Mrs. Popplewell, like a fat and most kind-hearted lady, stared at the officer, as if she longed to choke him.

"I tell you again, Captain Anerley," cried the lieutenant, with his temper kindling, "that no consideration moved me, sir, except that of duty. As for my spying after any pretty girls, my wife, who is now down with her eighth baby, would get up sooner than hear of it. If I intruded upon your daughter, so as to justify her in knocking me down, Captain Anerley, it was because—well I won't say, Mary, I won't say; we have all been young; and our place is to know better."

"Sir, you are a gentleman," cried Popplewell with heat; "here is my hand, and you may trespass on mypremises, without bringing any attorney."

"Did you say her eighth baby? Oh, Com mander Carroway," Mrs. Popplewell began to

whisper; "what a most interesting situation! Oh, I see why you have such high colour, sir."

"Madam, it is enough to make me pale. At the same time I do like sympathy; and my dear wife loves the smell of tan."

"We have retired, sir, many years ago, and purchased a property near the sea-side; and from the front gate you must have seen—but oh, I forgot, captain, you came through the hedge, or at any rate down the row of kidney-beans."

"I want to know the truth," shouted Stephen Anerley, who had been ploughing through his brow into his brain, while he kept his eyes fixed upon his daughter's, and there found abashment, but no abasement; "nought have I to do with any little goings on, or whether an action was a gentleman's or not. That question belongs to the regulars, I wand, or to the folk who have retired. Nobbut a farmer am I, in little business; but concerning of my children I will have my say. All of you tell me what is this about my Mary."

As if he would drag their thoughts out of them, he went from one to another with a

hard quick glance, which they all tried to shun; for they did not want to tell until he should get into a better frame of mind. And they looked at Mistress Anerley, to come forth and take his edge off; but she knew that when his eyes were so, to interfere was mischief. But Carroway did not understand the man.

"Come now, Anerley," the bold lieutenant said; "what are you getting into such a way about? I would sooner have lost the hundred pounds twice over, and a hundred of my own—if so be I ever had it—than get little Mary into such a row as this. Why, Lord bless my heart, one would think that there was murder in a little bit of sweet-hearting! All pretty girls do it; and the plain ones too. Come and smoke a pipe, my good fellow, and don't terrify her."

For Mary was sobbing in a corner by herself, without even her mother to come up and say a word.

"My daughter never does it," answered Stephen Anerley; "my daughter is not like the foolish girls and women. My daughter knows her mind; and what she does she means to do. Mary, lof, come to your father, and tell him that every one is lying of you.

Sooner would I trust a single quiet word of yours, than a pile, as big as Flambro' Head, sworn by all the world together against my little Mary."

The rest of them, though much aggrieved by such a bitter calumny, held their peace, and let him go with open arms towards his Mary. The farmer smiled, that his daughter might not have any terror of his public talk; and because he was heartily expecting her to come and tell him some trifle, and be comforted, and then go for a good happy cry, while he shut off all her enemies.

But instead of any nice work of that nature, Mary Anerley arose and looked at the people in the room—which was their very best, and by no means badly furnished—and after trying to make out, as a very trifling matter, what their unsettled minds might be, her eyes came home to her father's, and did not flinch, although they were so wet.

Master Anerley, once and for ever, knew that his daughter was gone from him. That a stronger love than one generation can have for the one before it—pure and devoted and ennobling as that love is—now had arisen, and would force its way. He did not think

it out like that, for his mind was not strictly analytic—however his ideas were to that effect; which is all that need be said about them.

"Every word of it is true," the girl said gently; "father, I have done every word of what they say, except about knocking down Captain Carroway. I have promised to marry Robin Lyth—by-and-by—when you agree to it."

Stephen Anerley's ruddy cheeks grew pale, and his blue eyes glittered with amazement. He stared at his daughter till her gaze gave way; and then he turned to his wife, to see whether she had heard of it. "I told you so," was all she said; and that tended little to comfort him. But he broke forth into no passion, as he might have done with justice and some benefit; but turned back quietly and looked at his Mary, as if he were saying, once for all, "good-bye."

"Oh, don't, father, don't," the girl answered with a sob; "revile me, or beat me, or do anything but that. That is more than I can bear."

"Have I ever reviled you? Have I ever beaten you?"

"Never, never once, in all my life. But I

beg you—I implore of you to do it now. Oh, father, perhaps I have deserved it."

"You know best what you deserve. But no bad word shall you have of me. Only you must be careful for the future never to call me 'father.'"

The farmer forgot all his visitors, and walked, without looking at anybody, towards the porch. Then that hospitable spot re-awakened his good manners; and he turned and smiled as if he saw them all sitting down to something juicy.

"My good friends, make yourselves at home," he said; "the mistress will see to you, while I look round. I shall be back directly, and we will have an early supper."

But when he got outside, and was alone with earth and sky, big tears arose into his brave blue eyes, and he looked at his ricks, and his workmen in the distance, and even at the favourite old horse that whinnied and came to have his white nose rubbed, as if none of them belonged to him ever any more. "A' would sooner have heard of broken bank," he muttered to himself and to the ancient horse; "fifty times sooner, and begin the

world anew; only to have Mary for a little child again."

As the sound of his footsteps died away, the girl hurried out of the room, as if she were going to run after him; but suddenly stopped in the porch, as she saw that he scarcely even cared to feel the cheek of "Lightfoot," who made a point of rubbing up his master's whiskers with it. "Better wait, and let him come round," thought Mary; "I never did see him so put out." Then she ran up the stairs to the window on the landing, and watched her dear father grow dimmer and dimmer, up the distance of the hill, with a bright young tear for every sad old step.

CHAPTER VII.

DOWN AMONG THE DEAD WEEDS.

Can it be supposed that all this time Master Geoffrey Mordacks, of the City of York, land-agent, surveyor, and general factor, and maker and doer of everything whether general or particular, was spending his days in doing nothing, and his nights in dreaming? If so, he must have had a sunstroke, on that very bright day of the year, when he stirred up the minds of the washerwomen, and the tongue of Widow Precious. But Flamborough is not at all the place for sunstroke, although it reflects so much in whitewash; neither had Mordacks the head to be sunstruck, but a hard, impenetrable, wiry poll, as weather-proof as felt asphalted. At first sight almost everybody said that he must have been a soldier, at the time when soldiers were made

of iron, whalebone, whipcord, and ramrods. Such opinions he rewarded with a grin, and shook his straight shoulders straighter. If pride of any sort was not beneath him, as a matter of strict business, it was the pride which he allowed his friends to take in his military figure and aspect.

This gentleman's place of business was scarcely equal to the expectations, which might have been formed from a view of the owner. The old King's Staith, on the right hand after crossing Ouse Bridge from the Micklegate, is a passage-way scarcely to be called a street, but combining the features of an alley, a lane, a jetty, a quay, and a barge-walk, and ending ignominiously. Nevertheless, it is a lively place sometimes, and in moments of excitement. Also it is a good place for business, and for brogue of the broadest; and a man, who is unable to be happy there, must have something on his mind unusual. Geoffrey Mordacks had nothing on his mind except other people's business; which (as in the case of Lawyer Jellicorse) is a very favourable state of the human constitution for happiness.

But though Mr. Mordacks attended so to

other people's business, he would not have anybody to attend to his. No partner, no clerk, no pupil had a hand in the inner breast-pockets of his business; there was nothing mysterious about his work, but he liked to follow it out alone. Things that were honest and wise came to him to be carried out with judgment; and he knew that the best way to carry them out is to act with discreet candour. For the slug shall be traced by his slime; and the spider who shams death shall receive it.

Now here, upon a very sad November afternoon, when the Northern day was narrowing in, and the Ouse, which is usually of a ginger colour, was nearly as dark as a nutmeg; and the bridge, and the staith, and the houses, and the people resembled one another in tint and tone; while between the Minster and the Clifford Tower there was not much difference of outline; here and now Master Geoffrey Mordacks was sitting in the little room where strangers were received. The live part of his household consisted of his daughter and a very young Geoffrey, who did more harm than good, and a thoroughly hard-working country-maid,

whose slowness was gradually giving way to pressure.

The weather was enough to make anybody dull, and the sap of every human thing insipid; and the time of day suggested tea, hot cakes, and the crossing of comfortable legs. Mordacks could well afford all these good things, and he never was hard upon his family; but every day he liked to feel that he had earned the bread of it, and this day he had laboured without seeming to earn anything. For after all the ordinary business of the morning, he had been devoting several hours to the diligent revisal of his premises and data, in a matter which he was resolved to carry through, both for his credit and his interest. And this was the matter which had cost him two days' ride, from York to Flamborough, and three days on the road home, as was natural after such a dinner as he made in little Denmark. But all that trouble he would not have minded, especially after his enjoyment of the place, if it had only borne good fruit. He had felt quite certain that it must do this, and that he would have to pay another visit to the Head, and eat another duck, and have a flirt with Widow Precious.

But up to the present time nothing had come of it, and so far as he could see he might just as well have spared himself that long rough ride. Three months had passed, and that surely was enough for even Flamborough folk to do something; if they ever meant to do it. It was plain that he had been misled for once, that what he suspected had not come to pass, and that he must seek elsewhere the light which had gleamed upon him vainly from the Danish town. To this end he went through all his case again, while hope (being very hard to beat as usual) kept on rambling over everything unsettled, with a very sage conviction that there must be something there, and doubly sure, because there was no sign of it.

Men at the time of life which he had reached, conducting their bodies with less suppleness of joint, and administering food to them with greater care, begin to have doubts about their intellect as well, whether it can work as briskly as it used to do. And the mind falling under this discouragement of doubt, asserts itself amiss in making futile strokes, even as a gardener can never work his best, while conscious of suspicious glances

through the window-blinds. Geoffrey Mordacks told himself, that it could not be the self it used to be, in the days when no mistakes were made, but everything was evident at half a glance, and carried out successfully with only half a hand. In this Flamborough matter he had felt no doubt of running triumphantly through, and being crowned with five hundred pounds in one issue of the case, and five thousand in the other. But lo! here was nothing. And he must reply, by the next mail, that he had made a sad mistake.

Suddenly, while he was rubbing his wiry head with irritation, and poring over his letters for some clue, like a dunce going back through his pot-hooks, suddenly a great knock sounded through the house—one, two, three—like the thumping of a mallet on a cask, to learn whether any beer may still be hoped for.

"This must be a Flamborough man," cried Master Mordacks, jumping up; "that is how I heard them do it; they knock the doors, instead of knocking at them. It would be a very strange thing just now, if news were to come from Flamborough; but the stranger a thing is, the more it can be trusted, as

often is the case with human beings. Whoever it is, show them up at once," he shouted down the narrow stairs; for no small noise was arising in the passage.

"A' canna coom oop! I wand a' canna," was the answer in Kitty's well-known brogue; "how can a', when a' hanna got naa legs?"

"Oh ho! I see," said Mr. Mordacks to himself; "my veteran friend from the watch-tower, doubtless. A man with no legs would not have come so far for nothing. Show the gentleman into the parlour, Kitty; and Miss Arabella may bring her work up here."

The general factor, though eager for the news, knew better than to show any haste about it; so he kept the old mariner just long enough in waiting, to damp a too covetous ardour, and then he complacently locked Arabella in her bedroom, and bolted off Kitty in the basement; because they both were sadly inquisitive, and this strange arrival had excited them.

"Ah, mine ancient friend of the tower! Veteran Joseph, if my memory is right," Mr. Mordacks exclaimed in his lively way, as he went up and offered the old tar both hands, to seat him in state upon the sofa;

but the legless sailor condemned "them swabs," and crutched himself into a hard-bottomed chair. Then he pulled off his hat, and wiped his white head with a shred of old flag, and began hunting for his pipe.

"First time I ever was in York city; and don't think much of it, if this here is a sample."

"Joseph, you must not be supercilious," his host replied with an amiable smile; "you will see things better through a glass of grog; and the state of the weather points to something dark. You have had a long journey, and the scenery is new. Rum shall it be, my friend? Your countenance says 'yes.' Rum, like a ruby of the finest water, have I; and no water shall you have with it. Said I well? A man without legs must keep himself well above water."

"First time I ever was in York city," the ancient watchman answered, "and grog must be done as they does it here. A berth on them old walls would suit me well; and no need to travel such a distance for my beer."

"And you would be the man of all the world for such a berth," said Master Mordacks gravely, as he poured the sparkling liquor into a glass that was really a tumbler;

"for such a post we want a man who is himself a post; a man who will not quit his duty, just because he cannot; which is the only way of making sure. Joseph, your idea is a very good one, and your beer could be brought to you at the middle of each watch. I have interest; you shall be appointed."

"Sir, I am obligated to you," said the watchman; "but never could I live a month without a wink of sea-stuff. The coming of the clouds, and the dipping of the land, and the waiting of the distance for what may come to be inside of it; let alone how they goes changing of their colour, and making of a noise that is always out of sight; it is the very same as my beer is to me. Master, I never could get on without it."

"Well, I can understand a thing like that," Mordacks answered graciously; "my water-butt leaked for three weeks, pat, pat, all night long upon a piece of slate, and when a man came and caulked it up, I put all the blame upon the pillow; but the pillow was as good as ever. Not a wink could I sleep till it began to leak again; and you may trust a York workman that it wasn't very long. But, Joseph, I have interest at Scarborough also.

The castle needs a watchman for fear of tumbling down; and that is not the soldiers' business, because they are inside. There you could have quantities of sea-stuff, my good friend; and the tap at the Hooked Cod is nothing to it there. Cheer up, Joseph, we will land you yet. How the devil did you manage now to come so far?"

"Well now, your Honour, I had rare luck for it, as I must say ever since I set eyes on you. There comes a son of mine as I thought were lost at sea; but not he, blow me! nearly all of him come back, with a handful of guineas, and the memory of his father. Lord! I could have cried; and he up and blubbered fairly, a trick as he learned from ten Frenchmen he had killed. Ah! he have done his work well, and airned a good conduck—fourpence halfpenny a day, so long as ever he shall live hereafter."

"In this world you mean, I suppose, my friend; but be not overcome, such things will happen. But what did you do with all that money, Joseph?"

"We never wasted none of it, not half a groat, sir. We finished out the cellar at the Hooked Cod first; and when Mother Precious

made a grumble of it, we gave her the money for to fill it up again, upon the understanding to come back when it was ready; and then we went to Burlington, and spent the rest in poshays like two gentlemen; and when we was down upon our stumps at last, for only one leg there is between us both, your Honour, my boy he ups and makes a rummage in his traps; which the Lord he put it into his mind to do so, when he were gone a few good sheets in the wind; and there sure enough he finds five good guineas in the tail of an old hankercher he had clean forgotten; and he says, 'Now, father, you take care of them. Let us go and see the capital, and that good gentleman, as you have picked up a bit of news for.' So we shaped a course for York, on board the schooner 'Mary Anne,' and from Goole in a barge as far as this here bridge; and here we are, high and dry, your Honour. I was half a mind to bring in my boy Bob; but he saith, 'Not without the old chap axes;' and being such a noisy one I took him at his word; though he hath found out what there was to find—not me."

"How noble a thing is parental love!" cried the general factor, in his hard, short

way, which made many people trust him, because it was unpleasant; "and filial duty of unfathomable grog! Worthy Joseph, let your narrative proceed."

"They big words is beyond me, sir. What use is any man to talk over a chap's head?"

"Then dash your eyes, go on, Joe. Can you understand that, now?"

"Yes, sir, I can, and I likes a thing put sensible. If the gentlemen would always speak like that, there need be no difference 'atween us. Well, it was all along of all that money-bag of Bob's, that he and I found out anything. What good were your guinea? Who could stand treat on that, more than a night or two, and the right man never near you? But when you keep a good shop open for a month, as Bob and me did with Widow Tapsy, it standeth to reason that you must have everybody, to be called at all respectable, for miles and miles around. For the first few nights or so, some on 'em holds off—for an old chalk against them, or for doubt of what is forrard, or for cowardliness of their wives, or things they may have sworn to stop, or other bad manners. But only go on a little longer, and let them see that you don't care,

and send everybody home a'singing through the lanes as merry as a voting time for Parliament, and the outer ones begins to shake their heads, and to say that they are bound to go, and stop the racket of it. And so you get them all, your Honour, saints as well as sinners; if you only keeps the tap turned long enough."

"Your reasoning is ingenious, Joseph, and shows a deep knowledge of human nature. But who was this tardy saint that came at last for grog?"

"Your Honour, he were as big a sinner as ever you clap eyes on. Me and my son was among the saw-dust, spite of our three crutches, and he spreading hands at us, sober as a judge, for lumps of ungenerous iniquity. Mother Tapsy told us of it, the very next day, for it was not in our power to be ackirate when he done it, and we see everybody laffing at us round the corner. But we took the wind out of his sails the next night, Captain, you may warrant us. Here's to your good health, sir, afore I beats to win'ard."

"Why, Joseph, you seem to be making up lost way for years of taciturnity in the tower. They say there is a balance in all things."

"We had the balance of him next night, and no mistake, your Honour. He was one of them long-shore beggars as turns up here, there, and everywhere, galley-raking, like a stinking ray-fish when the tide goes out; thundering scoundrels that make a living of it, pushing out for roguery with their legs tucked up; no courage for smuggling, nor honest enough, they goes on anyhow with their children paid for. We found out what he were, and made us more ashamed, for such a sneaking rat to preach upon us, like a regular hordinated chaplain, as might say a word or two and mean no harm, with the licence of the Lord to do it. So my son Bob and me called a court-martial in the old tower, so soon as we come round; and we had a red herring, because we was thirsty, and we chawed a bit of pig-tail to keep it down. At first we was glum; but we got our peckers up, as a family is bound to do when they comes together. My son Bob was a sharp lad in his time, and could read in Holy Scripter, afore he chewed a quid; and I see'd a good deal of it in his mind now, remembering of King Solomon. 'Dad,' he says, 'fetch out that bottle as was left of French white

brandy; and rouse up a bit of fire in the old port-hole. We ain't got many toes to warm between us'—only five, you see, your worship—'but,' says he, 'we'll warm up the currents where they used to be.'

"According to what my son said, I done; for he leadeth me now, being younger of the two, and still using half of a shoemaker. However, I says to him, 'Warm yourself, it don't lay in my power to do that for you.' He never said nothing; for he taketh after me, in tongue and other likings; but he up with the the kettle on the fire, and put in about a fathom and a half of pig-tail. 'So?' says I; and he says, 'So!' and we both of us began to laugh, as long and as gentle as a pair of cockles, with their tongues inside their shells.

"Well, your Honour understands; I never spake so much before since ever I pass my coorting time. We boiled down the pig-tail to a pint of tidy soup, and strained it as bright as sturgeon juice; then we got a bottle with 'Navy Supply' on a bull's-eye in the belly of it; and we filled it with the French white brandy, and the pig-tail soup, and a noggin of molasses, and shook it all up well together; and a better contract-rum, your

Honour, never come into high admiral's stores."

"But Joseph, good Joseph," cried Mr. Mordacks; "do forge ahead a little faster. Your private feelings, and the manufacture of them are highly interesting to you; but I only want to know what came of it."

"Your Honour is like a child hearing of a story; you wants the end first, and the middle of it after; but I bowls along with a hitch and a squirt, from habit of fo'castle; and the more you crosses hawse, the wider I shall head about, or down helm, and bear off mayhap. I can hear my Bob a singing: what a voice he hath! They tell me it cometh from the timber of his leg; the same as a old Cremony. He tuned up a many times in yonder old barge, and shook the brown water, like a frigate's wake. He would just make our fortin in the Minister, they said, with Black-eyed Susan and Tom Bowline."

"Truly, he has a magnificent voice; what power, what compass, what a rich clear tone! In spite of the fog I will have the window up."

Geoffrey Mordacks loved good singing, the grandest of all melody, and impatient as

he was, he forgot all hurry; while the river, and the buildings, and the arches of the bridge, were ringing, and echoing, and sweetly embosoming the mellow delivery of the one-legged tar. And old Joe was highly pleased, although he would not show it, at such an effect upon a man so hard and dry.

"Now, your Honour, it is over-bad of you," he continued, with a softening grin; "to hasten me so, and then to hear me out o' window, because Bob hath a sweeter pipe. Ah, he can whistle like a blackbird, too, and gain a lot of money; but there, what good? He sacrifices it all to the honour of his heart, first maggot that cometh into it; and he done the very same with Rickon Goold, the Methody galley-raker. We never was so softy when I were afloat. But your Honour shall hear, and give judgment for yourself.

"Mother Precious was ready in her mind to run out a double-shotted gun at Rickon, who liveth down upon the rabbit-warren, to the other side of Bempton, because he scarcely ever doth come nigh her; and when he do come, he putteth up both hands, to bless her for hospitality, but neither of them into his breeches-pocket. And being a lone woman,

she doth feel it. Bob and me gave her sailing-orders—'twould amaze you, Captain; all was carried out as ship-shape as the battle of the Nile. There was Rickon Goold at anchor, with a spring upon his cable, having been converted; and he up and hailed that he would slip, at the very first bad word we used. My son hath such knowledge of good words, that he answered, 'Amen, so be it.'

"Well, your Honour, we goes on decorous, as our old Quarter-Master used to give the word; and we tried him first with the usual tipple, and several other hands dropped in. But my son and me never took a blessed drop, except from a gin-bottle full of cold water, till we see all the others with their scuppers well awash. Then Bob he findeth fault—Lor' how beautiful he done it!—with the scantling of the stuff; and he shouteth out, 'Mother, I'm blest if I won't stand that old guinea bottle of best Jamaica, the one as you put by, with the cobwebs on it, for Lord Admiral. No Lord Admiral won't come now. Just you send away, and hoist it up.'

"Rickon Goold pricked up his ugly ears at this; and Mother Tapsy did it bootiful. And to cut a long yarn short, we spliced him,

Captain, with never a thought of what would come of it; only to have our revenge, your Honour. He showed himself that greedy of our patent rum, that he never let the bottle out of his own elbow, and the more he stowed away the more his derrick-chains was creaking; but if anybody reasoned, there he stood upon his rights, and defied every way of seeing different; until we was compelled to take and spread him down, in the little room with sea-weeds over it.

"With all this, Bob and me was as sober as two judges, though your Honour would hardly believe it perhaps; but we left him in the dark, to come round upon the weeds; as a galley-raker ought to do. And now we began to have a little drop ourselves, after towing the prize into port, and recovering the honour of the British Navy; and we stood all round to every quarter of the compass, with the bottom of the locker still not come to shallow soundings. But sudden our harmony was spoiled by a scream, like a whistle from the very bottom of the sea.

"We all of us jumped up, as if a gun had broke its lashings; and the last day of judgment was the thoughts of many bodies; but

Bob he down at once with his button-stump gun-metal, and takes the command of the whole of us. 'Bear a hand, all on you,' he saith quite steadfast; 'Rickon Goold is preaching to his own text to-night.' And so 'a was, sure enough; so 'a was, your Honour.

"We thought he must have died, although he managed to claw off of it, with confessing of his wickedness, and striking to his Maker. All of us was frightened so, there was no laugh among us, till we come to talk over it afterwards. There the thundering rascal lay in the middle of that there mangerie of sea-stuff, as Mother Precious is so proud of, that the village calleth it the 'Widow's Weeds.' Blest if he didn't think that he were a'lying at the bottom of the sea, among the stars and cuttles, waiting for the day of judgment.

"'Oh, Captain McNabbins, and Mate Govery,' he cries, 'the hand of the Lord hath sent me down to keep you company down here. I never would 'a done it, Captain, hard as you was on me, if only I had knowed how dark, and cold, and shivery it would be down here. I cut the big bunk out; I'll not lie; no lies is any good down here, with the fingers of the deep things pointing to me, and the black

devil's wings coming over me—but a score of years agone it were, and never no one dreamed of it—oh, pull away, pull, for God's sake pull—the wet woman, and the three innocent babbies, crawling over me, like congers!'

"This was the shadows of our legs, your Honour, from good Mother Tapsy's candle; for she was in a dreadful way, by this time, about her reputation and her weeds, and come down with her tongue upon the lot of us. 'Enter all them names upon the log,' says I to Bob, for he writeth like a scholar. But Bob says, 'Hold hard, Dad; now or never.' And with that, down he goeth on the deck himself, and wriggleth up to Rickon through the weeds, with a hiss like a great sea-snake, and grippeth him. 'Name of ship, you sinner!' cried Bob in his deep voice, like Old Nick a-hailing from a sepulchre. 'Golconda, of Calcutta,' says the fellow, with a groan as seemed to come out of the whites of his eyes; and down goes his head again, enough to split a cathead. And that was the last of him we heard that night.

"Well, now, Captain, you scarcely would believe; but although my nob is so much older of the pair, and white where his is as black as

any coal, Bob's it was as first throwed the painter up, for a-hitching of this drifty to the starn of your consarns. And it never come across him, till the locker was run out, and the two of us pulling longer faces than our legs is. Then Bob, by the mercy of the Lord, like Peter, found them guineas in the corner of his swab—some puts it round their necks, and some up their noses; I never heard of such a thing till chaps run soft and watery—and so we come to this here place to change the air, and the breeding, and spin this yarn to your Honour's honour, as hath a liberal twist in it; and then to take orders, and draw rations, and any rears of pay fallen due, after all dibs gone in your service; and for Bob to tip a stave in the Minister."

"You have done wisely and well in coming here," said Mr. Mordacks cheerfully; "but we must have further particulars, my friend. You seem to have hit upon the clue I wanted, but it must be followed very cautiously. You know where to lay your hand upon this villain? You have had the sense not to scare him off?"

"Sarten, your honour. I could clap the

irons on him, any hour you gives that signal."

"Capital! Take your son to see the sights; and both of you come to me at ten to-morrow morning. Stop, you may as well take this half-guinea. But when you get drunk, drink inwards."

CHAPTER VIII.

MEN OF SOLID TIMBER.

Mr. Mordacks was one of those vivacious men, who have strong faith in their good luck, and yet attribute to their merits whatever turns out well. In the present matter he had done as yet nothing at all ingenious, or even to be called sagacious. The discovery of "Monument Joe," or "Peg-leg Joe," as he was called at Flamborough, was not the result of any skill whatever, either his own or the factor's, but a piece of as pure luck as could be. For all that, however, Mr. Mordacks intended to have the whole credit, as his sole and righteous due.

"Whenever I am at all down-hearted, samples of my skill turn up," he said to himself as soon as Joe was gone; "and happy results come home, on purpose to rebuke my

diffidence. Would any other man have got so far as I have got, by simple, straightforward, yet truly skilful action, without a suspicion being started? Old Jellicorse lies on his bed of roses, snoring folios of long words, without a dream of the gathering cloud. Those insolent ladies are revelling in the land from which they have ousted their only brother; they are granting leases not worth a straw; they are riding the high horse, they are bringing up that cub (who set the big dog at me) in every wanton luxury. But wait a bit, wait a bit, my ladies; as sure as I live I shall have you.

"In the first place, it is clear that my conclusion was correct concerning that poor 'Golconda;' and why not also in the other issue? The Indiaman was scuttled—I had never thought of that, but only of a wreck. It comes to the same thing; only she went down more quietly; and that explains a lot of things. She was bound for Leith, with the boy to be delivered into the hands of his Scotch relatives. She was spoken last off Yarmouth Roads, all well, and under easy sail. Very good so far. I have solved her fate, which for twenty years has been a

mystery. We shall have all particulars in proper time, by steering on one side of the law, which always huddles up everything. A keen eye must be kept upon that scoundrel; but he must never dream that he is watched at all; he has committed a capital offence. But as yet there is nothing, but his own raving, to prove that hideous story. The truth must be got at, by gentle means. I must not claim the 500*l*. as yet; but I am sure of getting it. And I have excellent hopes of the 5000*l*."

Geoffrey Mordacks never took three nights to sleep upon his thoughts (as the lawyer of Middleton loved to do), but rather was apt to overdrive his purport, with the goad of hasty action. But now he was quite resolved to be most careful; for the high hand would never do in such a ticklish matter; and the fewer the hands introduced at all into it, the better the chance of coming out clear and clean. The general factor had never done anything, which, in his opinion, was not thoroughly upright; and now, with his reputation made, and his conscience stiffened to the shape of it, even a large sum of money must be clean, and cleanly got at, to make it pay for handling.

This made him counsel with himself just now. For he was a superior man upon the whole, and particular always in feeling sure that the right word in anything would be upon his side. Not that he cared a groat for anybody's gossip; only that he kept a lofty tenour of good opinion. And sailors who made other sailors tipsy, and went rolling about on the floor all together, whether with natural legs or artificial, would do no credit to his stairs of office, on a fine market-day in the morning. On the other hand, while memory held sway, no instance could be cited of two jolly sailors coming to see the wonders of this venerable town, and failing to be wholly intoxicated with them, before the Minster-bell struck one.

This was to be avoided, or rather forestalled; as a thing inevitable should be. Even in York City, teeming as it is with most delightful queerities, the approach of two sailors with three wooden legs might be anticipated at a distant offing; so abundant are boys there, and everywhere. Therefore it was well provided, on the part of Master Mordacks, that Kitty, or Koity, the maid of all work, a damsel of muscular power and

hard wit, should hold tryst with these mariners in the time of early bucket, and appoint a little meeting with her master by-and-by. This she did cleverly, and they were not put out; because they were to dine at his expense at a snug little chop-house in Parliament Street, and there to remain, until he came to pay the score.

All this happened to the utmost of desires; and before they had time to get thick-witted, Mordacks stood before them. His sharp eyes took in sailor Bob, before the poor fellow looked twice at him; and the general factor saw that he might be trusted not to think too much for himself. This was quite as Mr. Mordacks hoped; he wanted a man who could hold his tongue, and do what he was told to do.

After a few words about their dinner, and how they got on, and so forth, the principal came to the point by saying, "Now both of you must start to-morrow morning; such clever fellows cannot be spared to go to sleep. You shall come and see York again, with free billet, and lashings of money in your pockets, as soon as you have carried out your sailing orders. To-night you may jol-

lify; but after that you are under strict discipline, for a month at least. What do you say to that, my men?"

Watchman Joe looked rather glum; he had hoped for a fortnight of stumping about, with a tail of admiring boys after him, and of hailing every public-house, the cut of whose jib was inviting; however, he put his knife into his mouth, with a bit of fat, saved for a soft adieu to dinner, and nodded for his son to launch true wisdom into the vasty deep of words.

Now Bob, the son of Joe, had striven to keep himself up to the paternal mark. He cited his father, as the miracle of the age, when he was a long way off; and when he was nigh at hand, he showed his sense of duty, nearly always, by letting him get tipsy first. Still they were very sober fellows in the main, and most respectable, when they had no money.

"Sir," began Bob, after jerking up his chin, as a sailor always does when he begins to think (perhaps for hereditary counsel with the sky); "my father and I have been hauling of it over, to do whatever is laid down by duty, without going any way again' ourselves.

And this is the sense we be come to, that we should like to have something handsome down, to lay by again' chances; also a dokkyment in black and white, to bear us harmless of the law, and enter the prize-money."

"What a fine councillor a' would have made!" Old Joe exclaimed, with ecstasy. "He hath been round the world three times—excuseth of him, for only one leg left."

"My friend, how you condemn yourself! You have not been round the world at all, and yet you have no leg at all;" so spake Mr. Mordacks, wishing to confuse ideas; for the speech of Bob misliked him.

"The corners of the body is the Lord's good-will," old Joe answered, with his feelings hurt; "he calleth home a piece to let the rest bide on, and giveth longer time to it—so saith King David."

"It may be so; but I forget the passage. Now what has your son Bob to say?"

Bob was a sailor of the fine old British type, still to be found even nowadays, and fit to survive for ever. Broad and resolute of aspect, set with prejudice as stiff as his own pig-tail, truthful when let alone, yet joyful in a lie, if anybody doubted him, peaceable in

little things through plenty of fight in great ones, gentle with women and children, and generous with mankind in general, expecting to be cheated, yet not duly resigned at being so, and subject to unaccountable extremes of laziness and diligence. His simple mind was now confused, by the general factor's appeal to him to pronounce his opinion; when he had just now pronounced it, after great exertion.

"Sir," he said; "I leave such things to father's opinion; he hath been ashore some years; and I almost forget how the land lays."

"Seafaring Robert, you are well advised. A man may go round the world till he has no limbs left, yet never overtake his father. So the matter is left to my decision. Very good; you shall have no reason to repent it. To-night you have liberty to splice the main-brace, or whatever your expression is for getting jolly drunk; in the morning you will be sobriety itself, sad, and wise, and aching. But hear my proposal, before you take a gloomy view of things, such as to-morrow's shades may bring. You have been of service to me, and I have paid you with great generosity; but what I have done, including

dinner, is dust in the balance to what I shall do, provided only that you act with judgment, discipline, and self-denial, never being tipsy more than once a week, which is fair naval average, and doing it then with only one another. Hard it may be; but it must be so. Now before I go any further, let me ask, whether you, Joseph, as a watchman under Government, have lost your position, by having left it for two months upon a private spree?"

"Lor, no, your Honour! Sure you must know more than that. I gived a old 'ooman elevenpence a week, and a pot of beer a Sunday, to carry out the dooties of the Government."

"You farmed out your appointment, at a lower figure. My opinion of your powers and discretion is enhanced; you will return to your post, with redoubled ardour, and vigour renewed by recreation; you will be twice the man you were, and certainly ought to get double pay. I have interest; I may be enabled to double your salary—if you go on well."

This made both of them look exceeding downcast, and chew the bitter quid of dis-

appointment. They had laid their heads together over glass number one, and resolved upon asking for a guinea every week; over glass number two, they had made up their minds upon getting two guineas weekly; and glass number three had convinced them, that they must be poor fools to accept less than three. Also they felt, that the guineas they had spent, in drinking their way up to a great discovery, should without hesitation be made good, ere ever they had another pint of health. In this catastrophe of large ideas, the father gazed sadly at the son, and the son reproachfully reflected the paternal gaze. How little availed it to have come up here, wearily going on upon yellow waters, in a barge where the fleas could man the helm, without aid of the stouter insect, and where a fresh run sailor was in more demand than salmon; and even without that, (which had largely enhanced the inestimable benefit of having wooden legs,) this pair of tars had got into a state of mind, to return the whole way upon horseback. No spurs could they wear, and no stirrups could they want, and to get up would be difficult; but what is the use of living, except to conquer difficulties? They

rejoiced all the more in the four legs of a horse, by reason of the paucity of their own; which approves a liberal mind. But now, where was the horse to come from, or the money to make him go?

"You look sad," proceeded Mr. Mordacks. "It grieves me when any good man looks sad; and doubly so when a brace of them do it. Explain your feelings, Joe, and Bob; if it lies in a human being to relieve them, I will do it."

"Captain, we only wants what is our due;" said Bob, with his chin up, and his strong eyes stern. "We have been on the loose; and it is the manner of us, and encouraged by the high authorities. We have come across, by luck of drink, a thing as seems to suit you; and we have told you all our knowledge, without no conditions. If you takes us for a pair of fools, and want no more of us, you are welcome, and it will be what we are used to; but if your meaning is to use us, we must have fair wages; and even so, we would have nought to do with it, if it was against an honest man; but a rogue who has scuttled a ship—lor, there!"

Bob cast out the juice of his chew into the

fire, as if it were the life-blood of such a villain, and looked at his father, who expressed approval by the like proceeding. And Geoffrey Mordacks was well content at finding them made of decent stuff. It was not his manner to do things meanly; and he had only spoken so, to moderate their minds and keep them steady.

"Mariner Bob, you speak well and wisely," he answered, with a superior smile. "Your anxiety as to ways and means does credit to your intellect. That subject has received my consideration. I have studied the style of life at Flamborough, and the prices of provisions—would that such there were in York—and to keep you in temperate and healthy comfort, without temptation, and with minds alert, I am determined to allow for the two of you, over and above all your present income from a grateful country (which pays a man less, when amputation has left less of him), the sum of one guinea and a half per week. But remember that, to draw this stipend, both of you must be in condition to walk one mile and a half on a Saturday night; which is a test of character. You will both be fitted up with solid steel ends,

by the cutler at the end of Ouse bridge, to-morrow morning, so that the state of the roads will not affect you; and take note of one thing, mutual support (graceful though it always is in paternal and filial communion) will not be allowed on a Saturday night. Each man must stand on his own stumps."

"Sir," replied Bob, who had much education, which led him to a knowledge of his failings; "never you fear but what we shall do it. Sunday will be the day of standing with a shake to it; for such is the habit of the navy. Father, return thanks; make a leg—no man can do it better. Master Mordacks, you shall have our utmost duty; but a little brass in hand would be convenient."

"You shall have a fortnight in advance; after that you must go every Saturday night to a place I will appoint for you. Now keep your own counsel; watch that fellow; by no means scare him at first, unless you see signs of his making off; but rather let him think that you know nothing of his crime. Labour hard to make him drink again; then terrify him like Davy Jones himself, and get every particular out of him; especially how he him-

self escaped, where he landed, and who was with him. I want to learn all about a little boy, (at least, he may be a big man now,) who was on board the ship 'Golconda,' under the captain's special charge. I cannot help thinking that the child escaped; and I got a little trace of something connected with him at Flamborough. I durst not make much inquiry there, because I am ordered to keep things quiet. Still I did enough to convince me almost, that my suspicion was an error; for Widow Precious—"

"Pay you no heed, sir, to any manœuvring of Widow Precious? We find her no worse than the other women; but not a blamed bit better."

"I think highly of the female race; at least, in comparison with the male one. I have always found reason to believe that a woman, put upon her mettle by a secret, will find it out, or perish."

"Your Honour, everybody knows as much as that; but it doth not follow that she tells it on again, without she was ordered not to do so."

"Bob, you have not been round the world for nothing. I see my blot, and you have

hit it; you deserve to know all about the matter now. Match me that button, and you shall have ten guineas."

The two sailors stared at the bead of Indian gold, which Mordacks pulled out of his pocket. Buttons are a subject for nautical contempt, and condemnation; perhaps because there is nobody to sew them on at sea; while ear-rings, being altogether useless, are held in good esteem and honour.

"I have seen a brace of ear-rings like it," said old Joe, wading through deep thought. "Bob, you knows who was a wearing of 'em."

"A score of them fishermen, like enough," cautious Bob answered; for he knew what his father meant, but would not speak of the great free-trader; for Master Mordacks might even be connected with the Revenue. "What use to go on about such gear? His Honour wanteth to hear of buttons, regulation buttons by the look of it, and good enough for Lord Nelson. Will you let us take the scantle, and the rig of it, your Honour?"

"By all means if you can do so, my friend; but what have you to do it with?"

"Hold on a bit, sir, and you shall see." With these words Bob clapped a piece of soft York bread into the hollow of his broad brown palm, moistened it with sugary dregs of ale, such as that good city loves, and kneading it firmly with some rapid flits of thumb, tempered and enriched it nobly with the mellow juice of quid. Treated thus, it took consistence, plastic, docile, and retentive pulp; and the colour was something like that of gold which had passed, according to its fate, through a large number of unclean hands.

"Now the pattern, your Honour," said Bob, with a grin; "I could do it from memory; but better from the thing." He took the bauble, and set it on the foot of a rummer which stood on the table; and in half a minute he had the counterpart in size, shape, and line; but without the inscription. "A sample of them in the hollow will do, and good enough for the nigger-body words—heathen writing to my mind." With lofty British intolerance, he felt that it might be a sinful thing to make such marks; nevertheless he impressed one side, whereon the characters were boldest, into the correspond-

ing groove of his paste model; then he scooped up the model on the broad blade of his knife, and set it in the oven of the little fireplace, in a part where the heat was moderate.

"Well done, indeed!" cried Mr. Mordacks, "you will have a better likeness of it than good Mother Precious. Robert, I admire your ingenuity. But all sailors are ingenious."

"At sea, in the trades, or in a calm, sir, what have we to do but to twiddle our thumbs, and practise fiddling with them? A lively tune is what I like, and a-serving of the guns red hot; a man must act according to what nature puts upon him. And nature hath taken one of my legs from me, with a cannon-shot from the French line-of-battle-ship—'Rights of Mankind' the name of her."

CHAPTER IX.

THE PROPER WAY TO ARGUE.

ALAS, how seldom is anything done in proper time and season! Either too fast, or too slow, is the clock of all human dealings; and what is the law of them, when the sun (the regulator of works and ways) has to be allowed for very often, on his own meridian? With the best intention every man sets forth, to do his duty, and to talk of it; and he makes quite sure that he has done it, and to his privy circle boasts, or lets them do it better for him; but before his lips are dry, his ears apprize him that he was a stroke too late.

So happened it with Master Mordacks; who of all born men was foremost, with his wiry fingers spread, to pass them through the scattery forelock of that mettlesome horse, old Time. The old horse galloped by

him unawares, and left him standing still, to hearken the swish of the tail, and the clatter of the hoofs, and the spirited nostrils neighing for a race, ou the wide breezy down at the end of the lane. But Geoffrey Mordacks was not to blame. His instructions were to move slowly, until he was sure of something worth moving for. And of this he had no surety yet; and was only too likely to lose it altogether, by any headlong action. Therefore, instead of making any instant rush, or belting on his pistols, and hiring the sagacious quadruped who understood his character, content he was to advance deliberately upon one foot and three artificial legs.

Meanwhile, at Anerley Farm, the usual fatness of full garners, and bright comfort of the evening hearth, the glow of peace, which labour kindles in the mind that has earned its rest, and the pleasant laziness of heart, which comes where family love lies careless, confident, and unassailed—the pleasure also of pitying the people who never can get in their wheat, and the hot benevolence of boiling down the bones for the man who has tumbled off one's own rick—all these blisses, large and little, were not in their usual prime.

The master of the house was stern, and silent, heavy, and careless of his customary victuals, neglectful also of his customary jokes. He disliked the worse side of a bargain as much as in his most happy moments; and the meditation, (which is generally supposed to be going on where speech is scarce,) was not of such loftiness as to overlook the time a man stopped round the corner. As a horse settles down to strong collar-work better, when the gloss of the stable takes the ruffle of the air; so this man worked at his business all the harder, with the brightness of the home-joys fading. But it went very hard with him, more than once, when he made a good stroke of salesmanship, to have to put the money in the bottom of his pocket, without even rubbing a bright half-crown, and saying to himself, "I have a'most a mind to give this to Mary."

Now if this settled and steadfast man (with three-quarters of his life gone over him, and less and less time every year for considering soft subjects), in spite of all that, was put out of his way by not being looked at as usual—though for that matter, perhaps, himself failed to look in search of those looks, as

usual—what on the other hand was likely to remain of mirth, and light-heartedness, in a weaker quarter? Mary, who used to be as happy as a bird, where worms abound and cats are scarce, was now in a grievous plight of mind, restless, lonely, troubled in her heart, and doubtful of her conscience. Her mother had certainly shown kind feeling, and even a readiness to take her part, which surprised the maiden after all her words; and once or twice they had had a cry together, clearing and strengthening their intellects desirably. For the more Mistress Anerley began to think about it, the more she was almost sure that something could be said on both sides. She never had altogether approved of the farmer's volunteering, which took him away to drill at places where ladies came to look at him; and where he slept out of his own bed, and got things to eat that she had never heard of; and he never was the better afterwards. If that was the thing which set his mind against free trade so bitterly, it went far to show that free trade was good, and it made all the difference of a blanket. And more than that, she had always said from the very first, and had even told

the same thing to Captain Carroway, in spite of his position, that nobody knew what Robin Lyth might not turn out in the end to be. He had spoken most highly of her, as Mary had not feared to mention; and she felt obliged to him for doing so, though of course he could not do otherwise. Still there were people who would not have done that, and it proved that he was a very promising young man.

Mary was pleased with this conclusion, and glad to have some one who did not condemn her; hopeful, moreover, that her mother's influence might have some effect by-and-by. But for the present it seemed to do more harm than good; because the farmer, having quite as much jealousy as justice, took it into silent dudgeon, that the mother of his daughter, who regularly used to be hard upon her for next to nothing, should now turn round and take her part, from downright womanism, in the teeth of all reason, and of her own husband! Brave as he was, he did not put it to his wife, in so strong a way as that; but he argued it so to himself, and would let it fly forth, without thinking twice about it, if they went on in that style much longer, quite

as if he were nobody, and they could do better without him. Little he knew, in this hurt state of mind—for which he should really have been too old—how the heart of his child was slow, and chill, stupid with the strangeness he had made, waiting for him to take the lead, or open some door for entrance, and watching for the humours of the elder body; as the young of past generations did. And sometimes, faithful as she was to plighted truth and tenderness, one coaxing word would have brought her home to the arms that used to carry her.

But while such things were waiting to be done till they were thought of, the time for doing them went by; and to think of them was memory. Master Popplewell had told Captain Anerley continually what his opinions were; fairly giving him to know, on each occasion, that they were to be taken for what they were worth; that it did not follow from his own success in life, that he might not be mistaken now; and that he did not care a d—n, except for Christian feeling, whether any fool hearkened to him twice or not. He said that he never had been far out, in any opinion he had formed in all his life; but none

the more for that, would he venture to foretell a thing with cross purposes about it. A man of sagacity and dealings with the world might happen to be right ninety-nine times in a hundred; and yet he might be wrong the other time. Therefore he would not give any opinion; except that everybody would be sorry by-and-by, when things were too late for mending.

To this the farmer listened with an air of wisdom, not put forward too severely: because brother Popplewell had got a lot of money, and must behave handsomely, when in a better world. The simplest way of treating him was just to let him talk—for it pleased him, and could do no harm—and then to recover self-content by saying what a fool he was, when out of hearing. The tanner partly suspected this; and it put his nature upon edge; for he always drove his opinions in, as if they were so many tenpenny nails, which the other man must either clinch, or strike back into his teeth outright. He would rather have that, than flabby silence, as if he were nailing into dry rot.

"I tell you what it is," he said, the third time he came over, which was well within a

week—for nothing breeds impatience faster than retirement from work—"you are so thick-headed in your farm-house ways, sometimes I am worn out with you. I do not expect to be thought of any higher, because I have left off working for myself; and Deborah is satisfied to be called 'Debby,' and walks no prouder than if she had got to clean her own steps daily. You cannot enter into what people think of me, counting Parson Beloe; and therefore it is no good saying anything about it. But, Stephen, you may rely upon it, that you will be sorry afterwards. That poor girl, the prettiest girl in Yorkshire, and the kindest and the best, is going off her victuals, and consuming of her substance; because you will not even look at her. If you don't want the child; let me have her. To us she is welcome as the flowers in May."

"If Mary wishes it, she can go with you," the farmer answered sternly; and hating many words, he betook himself to work, resolving to keep at it, until the tanner should be gone. But when he came home after dusk, his steadfast heart was beating faster than his stubborn mind approved. Mary might have taken him at his word, and flown for

refuge from displeasure, cold voice, and dull comfort, to the warmth, and hearty cheer, and love of the folk who only cared to please her, spoil her, and utterly ruin her. Folk who had no sense of fatherly duty, or right conscience; but, having piled up dirty money, thought that it covered everything; such people might think it fair to come between a father and his child, and truckle to her, by backing her up in whims that were against her good, and making light of right and wrong, as if they turned on money—but Mary (such a prudent lass, although she was a fool just now), must see through all such shallow tricks, such rigmarole about Parson Beloe, who must be an idiot himself to think so much of Simon Popplewell—for Easter offerings, no doubt—but there, if Mary had the heart to go away, what use to stand maundering about it? Stephen Anerley would be dashed, if he cared which way it was.

Meaning all this, Stephen Anerley, however, carried it out in a style at variance with such reckless vigour. Instead of marching boldly in at his own door, and throwing himself upon a bench, and waiting to be waited upon —he left the narrow gravel walk (which led

from the horse-gate to the front door) and craftily fetched a compass through the pleasure-beds and little shrubs, upon the sward, and in the dusk, so that none might see or hear him. Then priding himself upon his stealth, as a man with whom it is rare may do, yet knowing all the time that he was more than half ashamed of it, he began to peep in at his own windows, as if he were planning how to rob his own house. This thought struck him, but instead of smiling, he sighed very sadly; for his object was to learn whether house and home had been robbed of that which he loved so fondly. There was no Mary in the kitchen, seeing to his supper; the fire was bright, and the pot was there, but only shadows round it. No Mary in the little parlour; only Willie half-asleep, with a stupid book upon his lap, and a wretched candle guttering. Then, as a last hope, he peered into the dairy, where she often went at fall of night, to see things safe, and sang to keep the ghosts away. She would not be singing now of course, because he was so cross with her; but if she were there, it would be better than the merriest song for him. But no, the place was dark and cold,

tub and pan, and wooden skimmer, and the pails hung up to drain, all were left to themselves, and the depth of want of life was over them. "She hathn't been there for an hour," thought he; "a reek o' milk, and not my lassie."

Very few human beings have such fragrance of good-will as milk. The farmer knew that he had gone too far in speaking coarsely of the cow; whose children first forego their food for the benefit of ours, and then become veal to please us. "My little maid is gone," said the lord of many cows, and who had robbed some thousand of their dear calves. "I trow I must make up my mind to see my little maid no more."

Without compunction for any mortal cow (though one was bellowing sadly in the distance, who had lost her calf that day), and without even dreaming of a grievance there, Master Anerley sat down to think, upon a little bench hard by. His thoughts were not very deep or subtle; yet to him they were difficult, because they were so new and sad. He had always hoped to go through life in the happiest way there is of it, with simply doing common work, and heeding daily business,

and letting other people think the higher class of thought for him. To live as nature, cultivated quite enough for her own content, enjoys the round of months and years, the changes of the earth and sky, and gentle slope of time subsiding to softer shadows and milder tones. And, most of all, to see his children, dutiful, good, and loving, able and ready to take his place—when he should be carried from farm to church—to work the land he loved so well, and to walk in his ways, and praise him.

But now he thought, like Job in his sorrow, "All these things are against me." The air was laden with the scents of autumn, rich and ripe and soothing—the sweet fulfilment of the year. The mellow odour of stacked wheat, the stronger perfume of clover, the brisk smell of apples newly gathered, the distant hint of onions roped, and the luscious waft of honey, spread and hung upon the evening breeze. "What is the good of all this," he muttered, "when my little lassie is gone away, as if she had no father?"

"Father, I am not gone away. Oh father, I never will go away, if you will love me as you did."

Here Mary stopped; for the short breath of a sob was threatening to catch her words; and her nature was too like her father's to let him triumph over her. The sense of wrong was in her heart, as firm and deep as in his own, and her love of justice quite as strong; only they differed as to what it was. Therefore Mary would not sob until she was invited. She stood in the arch of trimmed yew-tree, almost within reach of his arms; and though it was dark, he knew her face as if the sun was on it.

"Dearie, sit down here," he said; "there used to be room for you and me, without two chairs, when you was my child."

"Father, I am still your child," she answered softly, sitting by him. "Were you looking for me just now? Say it was me you were looking for."

"There is such a lot of rogues to look for; they skulk about so, and they fire the stacks—"

"Now, father, you never could tell a fib," she answered, sidling closer up, and preparing for his repentance.

"I say that I was looking for a rogue. If the cap fits—" here he smiled a little, as much

as to say, "I had you there;" and then, without meaning it, from simple force of habit, he did a thing equal to utter surrender. He stroked his chin, as he always used to do when going to kiss Mary, that the bristles might lie down for her.

"The cap doesn't fit; nothing fits but you; you—you—you, my own dear father," she cried, as she kissed him again and again, and put her arms round to protect him. "And nobody fits you, but your own Mary. I knew you were sorry. You needn't say it. You are too stubborn, and I will let you off. Now don't say a word, father, I can do without it. I don't want to humble you, but only to make you good; and you are the very best of all people, when you please. And you never must be cross again with your darling Mary. Promise me immediately; or you shall have no supper."

"Well," said the farmer; "I used to think that I was gifted with the gift of argument. Not like a woman, perhaps; but still pretty well for a man, as can't spare time for speechifying, and hath to earn bread for self and young 'uns."

"Father, it is that arguing spirit that has

done you so much harm. You must take things as Heaven sends them; and not go arguing about them. For instance, Heaven has sent you me."

"So a' might," Master Anerley replied; "but without a voice from the belly of a fish, I wunna' believe that He sent Bob Lyth."

CHAPTER X.

FAREWELL, WIFE AND CHILDREN DEAR.

Now Robin Lyth held himself in good esteem; as every honest man is bound to do, or surely the rogues will devour him. Modesty kept him silent as to his merits very often; but the exercise of self-examination made them manifest to himself. As the Yorkshireman said to his minister, when pressed to make daily introspection, "I dare na do it, sir; it sets me up so, and leaveth no chance for my neighbours;" so the great free-trader, in charity for others, forbore to examine himself too much. But without doing that, he was conscious of being as good as Master Anerley; and intended, with equal mind and manner, to state his claim to the daughter's hand.

It was not, therefore, as the farmer thought,

any deep sense of illegality which kept him from coming forward now, as a gallant sailor always does; but rather the pressure of sterner business, and the hard necessity of running goods, according to honourable contract. After his narrow escape from outrage upon personal privilege—for the *habeas corpus* of the Constitution should at least protect a man while making love—it was clear that the field of his duties as a citizen was padlocked against him, until next time. Accordingly he sought the wider bosom of the ever-liberal sea; and leaving the noble Carroway to mourn—or in stricter truth, alas, to swear—away he sailed, at the quartering of the moon, for the land of the genial Dutchman.

Now this was the time when the forces of the realm were mightily gathered together against him. Hitherto there had been much fine feeling on the part of his Majesty's revenue, and a delicate sense of etiquette. All the commanders of the cutters on the coast, of whom and of which there now were three, had met at Carroway's festive board; and looking at his family had one and all agreed to let him have the first chance of the good prize-money. It was All Saints' Day of the

year gone by, when they met and thus enjoyed themselves; and they bade their host appoint his time; and he said he should not want three months. At this they laughed, and gave him twelve; and now the twelve had slipped away.

"I would much rather never have him caught at all," said Carroway to his wife, when his year of pre-caption had expired; "than for any of those fellows to nab him; especially that prig last sent down."

"So would I, dear; so would I, of course," replied Mrs. Carroway, who had been all gratitude for their noble self-denial when they made the promise; "what airs they would give themselves! And what could they do with the money? Drink it out! I am sure that the condition of our best tumblers, after they come, is something. People who don't know anything about it always fancy that glass will clean. Glass won't clean, after such men as those; and as for the table—don't talk of it."

"Two out of the three are gone," the lieutenant's conscience was not void of offence concerning tables; "gone upon promotion. Everybody gets promotion, if he only does

his very best never to deserve it. They ought to have caught Lyth long and long ago. What are such dummies fit for?"

"But Charles, you know that they would have acted meanly and dishonestly, if they had done so. They promised not to catch him; and they carried out their promise."

"Matilda, such questions are beyond you altogether. You cannot be expected to understand the service. One of those trumpery, half-decked craft—or they used to be half-deckers in my time—has had three of those fresh-meat Jemmies over her, in a single twelve-month. But of course, they were all bound by the bargain they had made. As for that, small thanks to them. How could they catch him, when I couldn't? They chop and they change so, I forget their names; my head is not so good as it was, with getting so much moonlight."

"Nonsense, Charles; you know them like your fingers. But I know what you want; you want Geraldine, you are so proud to hear her tell it."

"Tilly, you are worse. You love to hear her say it. Well, call her in, and let her do it. She is making an oyster-shell

cradle over there, with two of the blessed babies."

"Charles, how very profane you are! All babes are blest by the Lord, in an independent parable, whether they can walk, or crawl, or put up their feet, and take nourishment. Jerry, you come in this very moment. What are you doing with your two brothers there, and a dead skate—bless the children! Now say the cutters and their captains."

Geraldine, who was a pretty little girl, as well as a good and clever one, swept her wind-tossed hair aside, and began to repeat her lesson; for which she sometimes got a penny when her father had made a good dinner.

"His Majesty's cutter 'Swordfish,' Commander Nettlebones, senior officer of the eastern division after my papa, although a very young man still, carries a swivel-gun and two bow-chasers. His Majesty's cutter 'Kestrel,' commanded by Lieutenant Bowler, is armed with three long-Johns, or strap-guns, capable of carrying a pound of shrapnel. His Majesty's cutter 'Albatross,' Lieutenant Corkoran Donovan, carries no artillery yet—"

"Not artillery—guns, child; your mother calls them 'artillery.'"

"Carries no guns yet, because she was captured from the foreign enemy; and as yet she has not been reported staunch, since the British fire made a hole in her. It is, however, expected that those asses at the dockyard—"

"Geraldine, how often must I tell you that you are not to use that word? It is your father's expression."

"It is, however, expected that those donkeys at the dockyard will recommend her to be fitted with two brass howisyers."

"Howitzers, my darling. Spell that word and you shall have your penny. Now you may run out and play again. Give your old father a pretty kiss for it. I often wish," continued the lieutenant, as his daughter flew back to the dead skate and the babies, "that I had only got that child's clear head. Sometimes the worry is too much for me. And now if Nettlebones catches Robin Lyth, to a certainty I shall be superseded, and all of us go the workhouse. Oh, Tilly, why won't your old aunt die? We might be so happy afterwards."

"Charles, it is not only sinful, but wicked, to show any wish to hurry her. The Lord

knows best what is good for us; and our prayers upon such matters should be silent."

"Well, mine would be silent and loud too, according to the best chance of being heard. Not that I would harm the poor old soul; I wish her every heavenly blessing; and her time is come for all of them. But I never like to think of that, because one's own time might come first. I have felt very much out of spirits to-day, as my poor father did the day before he got his billet. You know, Matilda, he was under old Boscawen, and was killed by the very first shot fired; it must be five-and-forty years ago. How my mother did cry to be sure! But I was too young to understand it. Ah, she had a bad time with us all! Matilda, what would you do without me?"

"Why, Charles, you are not a bit like yourself. Don't go to-night; stay at home for once. And the weather is very uncertain too. They never will attempt their job to-night. Countermand the boats, dear; I will send word to stop them. You shall not even go out of the house yourself."

"As if it were possible! I am not an old

woman, nor even an old man yet, I hope. In half an hour I must be off. There will be good time for a pipe. One more pipe in the old home, Tilly. After all I am well contented with it; although now and then I grumble, and I don't like so much cleaning."

"The cleaning must be done; I could never leave off that. Your room is going to be turned out to-morrow, and before you go you must put away your papers, unless you wish me to do it. You really never seem to understand when things are really important. Do you wish me to have a great fever in the house? It is a fortnight since your boards were scrubbed; and how can you think of smoking?"

"Very well, Tilly, I can have it by-and-by, 'upon the dancing waves,' as little Tommy has picked up the song. Only I cannot let the men on duty; and to see them longing destroys my pleasure. Lord, how many times I should like to pass my pipe to Dick, or Ellis, if discipline allowed of it! A thing of that sort is not like feeding, which must be kept apart by nature; but this by custom only."

"And a very good custom, and most needful," answered Mrs. Carroway. "I never can see why men should want to do all sorts of foolish things with tobacco—dirty stuff, and full of dust. No sooner do they begin, like a tinder-box, than one would think that it made them all alike. They want to see another body puffing two great streams of reeking smoke from pipe and from mouth, as if their own was not enough; and their good resolutions to speak truth of one another float away, like so much smoke; and they fill themselves with bad charity. Sir Walter Raleigh deserved his head off, and Henry the Eighth knew what was right."

"My dear, I fancy that your history is wrong. The king only chopped off his own wives' heads. But the moral of the lesson is the same. I will go and put away my papers. It will very soon be dark enough for us to start."

"Charles, I cannot bear your going. The weather is so dark, and the sea so lonely, and the waves are making such a melancholy sound. It is not like the summer nights, when I can see you six miles off, with the moon upon the sails, and the land out of the

way. Let anybody catch him that has the luck. Don't go this time, Charley."

Carroway kissed his wife and sent her to the baby, who was squalling well upstairs. And when she came down he was ready to start, and she brought the baby for him to kiss.

"Good-bye, little chap—good-bye, dear wife." With his usual vigour and flourish, he said, "I never knew how to kiss a baby; though I have had such a lot of them."

"Good-bye, Charley, dear. All your things are right; and here is the key of the locker. You are fitted out for three days; but you must on no account make that time of it. To-morrow I shall be very busy; but you must be home by the evening. Perhaps there will be a favourite thing of yours for supper. You are going a long way; but don't be long."

"Good-bye, Tilly, darling — good-bye, Jerry, dear—good-bye, Tommy, boy, and all my countless family. I am coming home to-morrow with a mint of money."

CHAPTER XI.

TACTICS OF DEFENCE.

The sea at this time was not pleasant; and nobody looking at it longed to employ upon it any members of a shorter reach than eyes.

It was not rushing upon the land, nor running largely in the offing, nor making white streaks on the shoals; neither in any other places doing things remarkable. No sign whatever of coming storm, or gathering fury moved it; only it was sullen, heavy, petulant, and out of sorts. It went about its business in a state of lumps irregular, without long billows or big furrows, as if it took the impulse more of distant waters than of wind; and its colour was a dirty green. Ancient fishermen hate this, and ancient mariners do the same; for then the fish lie sulking on

their bellies, and then the ship wallows without gift of sail.

"Bear off, Tomkins, and lay by till the ebb. I can only say, dash the whole of it!"

Commander Nettlebones, of the "Swordfish," gave this order in disgust at last; for the tide was against her, with a heavy pitch of sea, and the mainsail scarcely drew the sheet. What little wind there was came off the land, and would have been fair if it had been firm; but often it dropped altogether where the cliffs, or the clouds that lay upon them, held it. The cutter had slipped away from Scarborough, as soon as it was dark last night, under orders for Robin Hood's Bay; where the "Albatross" and "Kestrel" were to meet her, bring tidings, and take orders. Partly by coast-riding, and partly by coast signals, it had been arranged that these three revenue cruisers should come together in a lonely place during the haze of November morning, and hold privy council of importance. From Scarborough, with any wind at all, or even with ordinary tide-run, a coal-barge might almost make sure of getting to Robin Hood's Bay in six hours, if the sea was fit to swim in. Yet, here was

a cutter, that valued herself upon her sailing powers, already eighteen hours out, and headed back perpetually, like a donkey-plough. Commander Nettlebones could not understand it; and the more impatient he became the less could he enter into it. The sea was nasty, and the wind uncertain, also the tide against him; but how often had such things combined to hinder, and yet he had made much fairer way! Fore-and-aft he bestrode the planks, and cast keen eyes at everything, above, around, or underneath; but nothing showed him anything. Nettlebones was a Cornishman, and Cornishmen at that time had a reverent faith in witchcraft. "Robin Lyth has bought the powers, or ancient Carroway has done it;" he said to himself, in stronger language than is now reportable. "Old Carroway is against us, I know, from his confounded jealousy; and this cursed delay will floor all my plans."

He deserved to have his best plans floored, for such vile suspicion of Carroway. Whatever the brave lieutenant did was loyal, faithful, and well above-board. Against the enemy he had his plans, as every great commander must, and he certainly did not

desire to have his glory stolen by Nettlebones. But that he would have suffered, with only a grin at the bad luck so habitual; to do any crooked thing against it was not in his nature. The cause of the grief of Commander Nettlebones lay far away from Carroway; and free trade was at the bottom of it.

For now this trim and lively craft was doing herself but scanty credit, either on or off a wind. She was like a poor cat with her tail in a gin, which sadly obstructs her progress; even more was she like to the little horse of wood, who sits on the edge of a table and gallops, with a balance weight limiting his energies. None of the crew could understand it, if they were to be believed; and the more sagacious talked of currents and mysterious "undertow." And sure enough it was undertow, the mystery of which was simple. One of the very best hands on board was a hardy seaman from Flamborough, akin to old Robin Cockscroft, and no stranger to his adopted son. This gallant seaman fully entered into the value of long leverage, and he made fine use of a plug-hole which had come to his knowledge behind his berth. It was just above the water-line, and out of

sight from deck, because the hollow of the run was there. And long ere the lights of Scarborough died into the haze of night, as the cutter began to cleave watery way, the sailor passed a stout new rope from a belaying pin through this hole, and then he betrayed his watch on deck by hauling the end up with a clue, and gently returning it to the deep with a long grappling iron made fast to it. This had not fluke enough to lay fast hold and bring the vessel up; for in that case it would have been immediately discovered; but it dragged along the bottom like a trawl, and by its weight, and a hitch every now and then in some hole, it hampered quite sufficiently the objectionable voyage. Instead of meeting her consorts in the cloud of early morning, the "Swordfish" was scarcely abreast of the Southern Cheek by the middle of the afternoon. No wonder if Commander Nettlebones was in a fury long ere that, and fitted neither to give nor take the counsel of calm wisdom; and this condition of his mind, as well as the loss of precious time, should have been taken into more consideration by those who condemned him for the things that followed.

"Better late than never, as they say," he cried, when the "Kestrel" and the "Albatross" hove in sight. "Tomkins, signal to make sail and close. We seem to be moving more lively at last. I suppose we are out of that infernal undertow."

"Well, sir, she seems like herself a little more. She've had a witch on board of her, that's where it is. When I were a younker, just joined his Majesty's forty-two gun frigate—"

"Stow that, Tomkins. No time now. I remember all about it, and very good it is. Let us have it all again when this job is done with. Bowler and Donovan will pick holes if they can, after waiting for us half-a-day. Not a word about our slow sailing, mind; leave that to me. They are framptious enough. Have everything trim, and all hands ready. When they range within hail, sing out for both to come to me."

It was pretty to see the three cutters meet, all handled as smartly as possible; for the Flamborough man had cast off his clog, and the "Swordfish" again was as nimble as need be. Lieutenants Bowler and Donovan were soon in the cabin of their senior officer, and

durst not question him very strictly as to his breach of rendezvous, for his manner was short and sharp with them.

"There is plenty of time, if we waste it not in talking," he said, when they had finished comparing notes. "All these reports we are bound to receive and consider; but I believe none of them. The reason why poor Carroway has made nothing but a mess of it is, that he will listen to the country people's tales. They are all bound together, all tarred with one brush—all stuffed with a heap of lies, to send us wrong; and as for the fishing-boats, and what they see, I have been here long enough already to be sure that their fishing is a sham nine times in ten, and their real business is to help those rogues. Our plan is to listen, and pretend to be misled."

"True for you, captain," cried the ardent Donovan. "You 'bout ship, as soon as you can see them out of sight."

"My own opinion is this," said Bowler, "that we never shall catch any fellow until we have a large sum of money placed at our disposal. The general feeling is in their favour, and against us entirely. Why is it

in their favour? Because they are generally supposed to run great risks, and suffer great hardships. And so they do; but not half so much as we do, who keep the sea in all sorts of weather, while they can choose their own. Also because they outrun the law, which nature makes everybody long to do, and admire the lucky ones who can. But most of all, because they are free-handed; and we can be only niggards. They rob the king with impunity, because they pay well for doing it; and he pays badly, or not at all, to defend himself from robbery. If we had a thousand pounds a-piece, with orders to spend it on public service, take no receipt, and give no account, I am sure that in three months we could stop all contraband work upon this coast."

"Upon me sowl, and so we could; and it's meself that would go into the trade, so soon as it was stopped with the thousand pounds."

"We have no time for talking nonsense," answered Nettlebones severely, according to the universal law, that the man who has wasted the time of others, gets into a flurry about his own. "Your suggestion, Bowler, is a very wise one, and as full as possible of

common sense. You also, Donovan, have shown with great sagacity what might come of it thereafter. But, unluckily, we have to get on as we can, without sixpence to spare for anybody. We know that the fishermen and people on the coast, and especially the womankind, are all to a man—as our good friend here would say—banded in league against us. Nevertheless, this landing shall not be, at least upon our district. What happens north of Teesmouth is none of our business; and we should have the laugh of the old Scotchman there, if they pay him a visit, as I hope they may; for he cuts many jokes at our expense. But, by the Lord Harry, there shall be no run between the Tees and Yare, this side of Christmas. If there is, we may call ourselves three old women. Shake hands, gentlemen, upon that point; and we will have a glass of grog to it."

This was friendly, and rejoiced them all; for Nettlebones had been stiff at first. Readily enough they took his orders, which seemed to make it impossible almost for anything large to slip between them, except in case of a heavy fog; and, in that case, they were to land, and post their outlooks near the likely places.

"We have shed no blood yet, and I hope we never shall," said the senior officer pleasantly. "The smugglers of this coast are too wise, and I hope too kind-hearted for that sort of work. They are not like those desperate scoundrels of Sussex. When these men are nabbed, they give up their venture as soon as it goes beyond cudgel-play, and they never lie in wait for a murderous revenge. In the south I have known a very different race, who would jump on an officer till he died, or lash him to death with their long cart-whips; such fellows as broke open Poole Custom-house, and murdered poor Galley and Cator, and the rest, in a manner that makes human blood run cold. It was some time back; but their sons are just as bad. Smuggling turns them all to devils."

"My belief is," said Bowler, who had a gift of looking at things from an outer point of view, "that these fellows never propose to themselves to transgress the law, but to carry it out according to their own interpretation. One of them reasoned with me some time ago, and he talked so well about the Constitution that I was at a loss to answer him."

"Me jewel, forbear," shouted Donovan;

"a clout on the head is the only answer for them Constitutionals. Niver will it go out of my mind about the time I was last in Cark; shure, then, and it was holiday time; and me sister's wife's cousin, young Tim O'Brady —Tim says to me, 'Now, Corkoran, my lad—'"

"Donovan," Nettlebones suddenly broke in, "we will have that story, which, I can see by the cut of your jib is too good to be hurried, when first we come together after business done. The sun will be down in less than half an hour, and by that time we all must be well under way. We are watched from the land, as I need not tell you; and we must not let them spy for nothing. They shall see us all stand out to sea to catch them in the open, as I said in the town-hall of Scarborough yesterday, on purpose. Everybody laughed; but I stuck to it, knowing how far the tale would go. They take it for a crotchet of mine, and will expect it, especially after they have seen us standing out; and their plans will be laid accordingly."

"The head-piece ye have is beyont me inthirely. And if ye stand out, how will ye lay close inshore?"

"By returning, my good friend, before the morning breaks; each man to his station, lying as close as can be by day, with proper outlooks hidden at the points, but standing along the coast every night, and communicating with sentries. Have nothing to say to any fishing-boats; they are nearly all spies, and that puzzles them. This Robin Hood's Bay is our centre for the present, unless there comes change of weather. Donovan's beat is from Whitby to Teesmouth, mine from Whitby to Scarborough, and Bowler's thence to Flamborough. Carroway goes where he likes, of course; as the manner of the man is. He is a little in the doldrums now, and likely enough to come meddling. From Flamborough to Hornsea is left to him, and quite as much as he can manage. Further south there is no fear; our Yarmouth men will see to that. Now, I think that you quite understand. Good-bye; we shall nab some of them to a certainty this time; they are trying it on too large a scale."

"If they runs any goods through me, then just ye may reckon the legs of me four times over."

"And if they slip in past me," said Bowler, "without a thick fog, or a storm that drives me off, I will believe more than all the wonders told of Robin Lyth."

"Oh! concerning that fellow, by-the-bye," Commander Nettlebones stopped his brother officers as they were making off; "you know what a point poor Carroway has made, even before I was sent down here, of catching the celebrated Robin for himself. He has even let his fellows fire at him once or twice when he was quietly departing; although we are not allowed to shoot except upon strenuous resistance. Cannon we may fire, but no muskets, according to wise ordinance. Luckily, he has not hit him yet; and, upon the whole, we should be glad of it; for the young fellow is a prime sailor, as you know, and would make fine stuff for Nelson. Therefore, we must do one thing of two—let Carroway catch him, and get the money to pay for all the breeches and the petticoats we saw; or if we catch him ourselves, say nothing, but draft him right off to the "Harpy." You understand me. It is below us to get blood-money upon the man. We are gentlemen, not thief-catchers."

The Irishman agreed to this at once; but Bowler was not well pleased with it. "Our duty is to give him up," he said.

"Your duty is to take my orders," answered Nettlebones severely. "If there is a fuss about it, lay the blame on me. I know what I am about in what I say. Gentlemen, good-bye, and good luck to you."

After long shivers in teeth of the wind and pendulous labour of rolling, the three cutters joyfully took the word to go. With a creak, and a cant, and a swish of canvas, upon their light heels they flew round, and trembled with the eagerness of leaping on their way. The taper boom dipped towards the running hills of sea, and the jib-foreleech drew a white arc against the darkness of the sky to the bowsprit's plunge. Then, as each keen cut-water clove with the pressure of the wind upon the beam, and the glistening bends lay over, green hurry of surges streaked with grey began the quick dance along them. Away they went merrily, scattering the brine, and leaving broad tracks upon the closing sea.

Away also went, at a rapid scamper, three men who had watched them from the breastwork of the cliffs—one went northward,

another to the south, and the third rode a pony up an inland lane. Swiftly as the cutters flew over the sea the tidings of their flight took wing ashore, and before the night swallowed up their distant sails, everybody on the land whom it concerned to know, knew as well as their steersmen what course they had laid.

CHAPTER XII.

INLAND OPINION.

Whatever may be said, it does seem hard, from a wholly disinterested point of view, that so many mighty men, with swift ships, armed with villainous saltpetre and sharp steel, should have set their keen faces all together and at once, to nip, defeat and destroy as with a blow, liberal and well-conceived proceedings, which they had long regarded with a larger mind. Every one who had been led to embark soundly and kindly in this branch of trade, felt it as an outrage and a special instance of his own peculiar bad luck, that suddenly the officers should become so active, For long success had encouraged enterprise; men who had made a noble profit nobly yearned to treble it, and commerce having shaken off her shackles,

flapped her wings, and began to crow; so at least she had been declared to do, at a public banquet given by the Mayor of Malton, and attended by a large grain factor, who was known as a wholesale purveyor of illicit goods.

This man, Thomas Rideout, long had been the head-master of the smuggling school. The poor sea-faring men could not find money to buy, or even hire the craft (with heavy deposit against forfeiture), which the breadth and turbulence of the North Sea made needful for such ventures. Across the narrow English Channel, an open lobster boat might run in common summer weather, without much risk of life or goods. Smooth water, sandy coves, and shelfy landings tempted comfortable jobs; and any man, owning a boat that would carry a sail as big as a shawl, might smuggle, with heed of the weather, and audacity. It is said, that once upon the Sussex coast, a band of haymakers, when the rick was done, and their wages in hand on a Saturday night, laid hold of a stout boat on the beach, pushed off to sea in tipsy faith of luck, and hit upon Dieppe with a set-fair breeze, having only a fisherman's

boy for guide. There on the Sunday they heartily enjoyed the hospitality of the natives; and the dawn of Tuesday beheld them rapt in domestic bliss and breakfast, with their money invested in old Cognac; and glad would they have been to make such hay every season. But in Yorkshire a good solid capital was needed to carry on free importation. Without broad bottoms and deep sides, the long and turbulent and often foggy voyage, and the rocky landing, could scarcely be attempted by sane folk; well-to-do people found the money, and jeopardized neither their own bodies, consciences, nor good repute. And perhaps this fact had more to do with the comparative mildness of the men, than difference of race, superior culture, or a loftier mould of mind; for what man will fight for his employer's goods with the ferocity inspired by his own? A thorough good ducking, or a tow behind a boat, was the utmost penalty generally exacted by the victors from the vanquished.

Now, however, it seemed too likely that harder measure must be meted. The long success of that daring Lyth, and the large scale of his operations, had compelled the

authorities to stir at last. They began by setting a high price upon him, and severely reprimanding Carroway, who had long been doing his best in vain, and becoming flurried did it more vainly still; and now they had sent the sharp Nettlebones down; who boasted largely, but as yet without result. The smugglers, however, were aware of added peril, and raised their wages accordingly.

When the pending great venture was resolved upon, as a noble finish to the season, Thomas Rideout would entrust it to no one but Robin Lyth himself; and the bold young mariner stipulated that after succeeding he should be free, and started in some more lawful business. For Dr. Upround, possessing as he did, great influence with Robin, and shocked as he was by what Carroway had said, refused to have anything more to do with his most distinguished parishioner, until he should forsake his ways. And for this he must not be thought narrow-minded, strait-laced, or unduly dignified. His wife quite agreed with him, and indeed, had urged it as the only proper course; for her motherly mind was uneasy about the impulsive nature

of Janetta; and chessmen to her were dolls, without even the merit of encouraging the needle. Therefore, with a deep sigh, the worthy magistrate put away his board—which came out again next-day—and did his best to endure for a night the arithmetical torture of cribbage; while he found himself supported by a sense of duty, and capable of preaching hard at Carroway, if he would only come for it on Sunday.

From that perhaps an officer of revenue may abstain, through the pressure of his duty and his purity of conscience; but a man of less correctness must behave more strictly. Therefore, when a gentleman of vigorous aspect, resolute step, and successful-looking forehead, marched into church the next Sunday morning, showed himself into a prominent position, and hung his hat against a leading pillar, after putting his mouth into it, as if for prayer, but scarcely long enough to say "Amen"—behind other hats low whispers passed that here was the great financier of free-trade, the Chancellor of the Exchequer of smuggling, the celebrated Master Rideout.

That conclusion was shared by the rector, whose heart immediately burned within him

to have at this man, whom he had met before and suspiciously glanced at in Weighing Lane, as an interloper in his parish. Probably this was the very man whom Robin Lyth served too faithfully; and the chances were that the great operations, now known to be pending, had brought him hither, spying out all Flamborough. The corruption of fish-folk, the beguiling of women with foreign silks and laces, and of men with brandy, the seduction of Robin from lawful commerce, and even the loss of his own pet pastime, were to be laid at this man's door. While donning his surplice, Dr. Upround revolved these things with gentle indignation, quickened as soon as he found himself in white—by clerical and theological zeal. These feelings impelled him to produce a creaking of the heavy vestry door, a well-known signal for his daughter to slip out of the chancel-pew, and come to him.

"Now, papa, what is it?" cried that quick young lady; "that miserable Methodist, that ruined your boots, has he got the impudence to come again? Oh, please do say so, and show me where he is; after church nobody shall stop me—"

"Janetta, you quite forget where you are, as well as my present condition. Be off like a good girl, as quick as you can, and bring No. 27 of my own handwriting—'Render unto Cæsar'—and put my hat upon it. My desire is that Billyjack should not know that a change has been made in my subject of discourse."

"Papa, I see; it shall be done to perfection, while Billyjack is at his very loudest roar in the chorus of the anthem. But do tell me who it is; or how can I enjoy it? And lemon drops—lemon drops—"

"Janetta, I must have some very serious talk with you. Now don't be vexed, darling; you are a thoroughly good girl, only thoughtless and careless; and remember, dear, church is not a place for high spirits."

The roctor, as behoved him, kissed his child behind the vestry door, to soothe all sting, and then he strode forth towards the reading-desk; and the tuning of fiddles sank to deferential scrape.

It was not at all a common thing, as one might know, for Widow Precious to be able to escape from casks and taps, and the frying pan of eggs demanded by some half-

drowned fisherman, also the reckoning of notches on the bench for the pints of the week unpaid for, and then to put herself into her two best gowns (which she wore in the winter, one over the other—a plan to be highly commended to ladies who never can have dress enough) and so to enjoy, without losing a penny, the warmth of the neighbourhood of a congregation. In the afternoon she could hardly ever do it, even if she had so wished, with knowledge that this was common people's time; so if she went at all, it must—in spite of the difference of length—be managed in the morning. And this very morning here she was, earnest, humble, and devout, with both the tap-keys in her pocket, and turning the leaves with a smack of her thumb, not only to show her learning, but to get the sweet approval of the rector's pew.

Now if the good rector had sent for this lady, instead of his daughter Janetta, the sermon which he brought would have been the one to preach, and that about Cæsar might have stopped at home; for no sooner did the widow begin to look about, taking in the congregation with a dignified eye, and

nodding to her solvent customers, than the wrath of perplexity began to gather on her goodly countenance. To see that distinguished stranger was to know him ever afterwards; his power of eating, and of paying, had endeared his memory; and for him to put up at any other house were foul shame to the "Cod Fish."

"Hath a' put up his beastie?" she whispered to her eldest daughter, who came in late.

"Naa, naa, no beastie," the child replied; and the widow's relish of her thumb was gone; for sooth to say, no Master Rideout, nor any other patron of free-trade was here, but Geoffrey Mordacks, of York · city, general factor, and universal agent.

It was beautiful to see how Dr. Upround, firmly delivering his text, and stoutly determined to spare nobody, even insisted in the present case upon looking at the man he meant to hit, because he was not his parishioner. The sermon was eloquent, and even trenchant. The necessity of duties was urged most sternly; if not of directly Divine institution (though learned parallels were adduced, which almost proved them to be so),

yet to every decent Christian citizen they were synonymous with duty. To defy or elude them, for the sake of paltry gain was a dark crime recoiling on the criminal; and the preacher drew a contrast between such guilty ways and the innocent path of the fisherman. Neither did he even relent and comfort, according to his custom, towards the end; that part was there, but he left it out; and the only consolation for any poor smuggler in all the discourse, was the final Amen.

But to the rector's great amazement, and inward indignation, the object of his sermon seemed to take it as a personal compliment. Mr. Mordacks not only failed to wince, but finding himself particularly fixed by the gaze of the eloquent divine, concluded that it was from his superior intelligence, and visible gifts of appreciation. Delighted with this, for he was not free from vanity, what did he do but return the compliment, not indecorously, but nodding very gently, as much as to say, "That was very good indeed, you were quite right, sir, in addressing that to me; you perceive that it is far above these common people. I never heard a better sermon."

"What a hardened rogue you are!" thought Dr. Upround; "how feebly and incapably I must have put it! If you ever come again, you shall have my Ahab sermon."

But the clergyman was still more astonished a very few minutes afterwards. For, as he passed out of the churchyard-gate, receiving, with his wife and daughter, the kindly salute of the parish, the same tall stranger stood before him, with a face as hard as a statue's, and, making a short, quick flourish with his hat, begged for the honour of shaking his hand.

"Sir, it is to thank you for the very finest sermon I ever had the privilege of hearing. My name is Mordacks, and I flatter nobody—except myself, that I know a good thing when I get it."

"Sir, I am obliged to you," said Dr. Upround stiffly, and not without suspicion of being bantered, so dry was the stranger's countenance, and his manner so peculiar; "and if I have been enabled to say a good word in season, and its season lasts, it will be a source of satisfaction to me."

"Yes, I fear there are many smugglers here. But I am no Revenue-officer, as your

congregation seemed to think. May I call upon business to-morrow, sir? Thank you; then may I say ten o'clock—your time of beginning, as I hear? Mordacks is my name, sir, of York city, not unfavourably known there. Ladies, my duty to you!"

"What an extraordinary man, my dear!" Mrs. Upround exclaimed, with some ingratitude, after the beautiful bow she had received. "He may talk as he likes; but he must be a smuggler. He said that he was not an officer; that shows it, for they always run into the opposite extreme. You have converted him, my dear; and I am sure that we ought to be so much obliged to him. If he comes to-morrow morning, to give up all his lace, do try to remember how my little all has been ruined in the wash, and I am sick of working at it."

"My dear, he is no smuggler. I begin to recollect. He was down here in the summer; and I made a great mistake. I took him for Rideout; and I did the same to-day. When I see him to-morrow, I shall beg his pardon. One gets so hurried in the vestry always; they are so impatient with their fiddles! A great deal of it was Janetta's fault."

"It always is my fault, papa, somehow or other," the young lady answered, with a faultless smile: and so they went home to the early Sunday dinner.

"Papa, I am in such a state of excitement; I am quite unfit to go to church this afternoon," Miss Upround exclaimed, as they set forth again. "You may put me in stocks made out of hassocks—you may rope me to the Flodden Field man's monument, of the ominous name of 'Constable;' but whatever you do, I shall never attend; and I feel that it is so sinful."

"Janetta, your mamma has that feeling sometimes; for instance, she has it this afternoon; and there is a good deal to be said for it. But I fear that it would grow with indulgence."

"I can firmly fancy that it never would; though one cannot be sure without trying. Suppose that I were to try it just once, and let you know how it feels at tea-time."

"My dear, we are quite round the corner of the lane! The example would be too shocking."

"Now, don't you make any excuses, papa.

Only one woman can have seen us yet; and she is so blind, she will think it was her fault. May I go? Quick, before any one else comes."

"If you are quite sure, Janetta, of being in a frame of mind which unfits you for the worship of your Maker—"

"As sure as a pike-staff, dear papa."

"Then, by all means, go before anybody sees you, for whom it might be undesirable; and correct your thoughts, and endeavour to get into a befitting state of mind by tea-time."

"Certainly, papa. I will go down on the stones, and look at the sea. That always makes me better; because it is so large and so uncomfortable."

The rector went on to do his duty, by himself. A narrow-minded man might have shaken solemn head, even if he had allowed such dereliction. But Dr. Upround knew that the girl was good, and he never put strain upon her honesty. So away she sped by a lonely little foot-path, where nobody could take from her contagion of bad morals; and, avoiding the incline of boats, she made off nicely for the quiet outer bay, and there,

upon a shelfy rock, she sat and breathed the sea.

Flamborough, excellent place as it is, and delightful, and full of interest for people who do not live there, is apt to grow dull perhaps for spirited youth, in the scanty and foggy winter light. There is not so very much of that choice product generally called "society," by a man who has a house to let in an eligible neighbourhood, and by ladies who do not heed their own. Moreover, it is vexatious not to have more rogues to talk about.

That scarcity may be less lamentable now, being one that takes care to redress itself, and perhaps any amateur purchaser of fish may find rogues enough now for his interest. But the rector's daughter pined for neither society nor scandal: she had plenty of interest in her life, and in pleasing other people, whenever she could do it with pleasure to herself, and that was nearly always. Her present ailment was not languor, weariness, or dulness, but rather the want of such things; which we long for when they happen to be scarce, and declare them to be our first need, under the sweet name of repose.

Her mind was a little disturbed by rumours,

wonders, and uncertainty. She was not at all in love with Robin Lyth, and laughed at his vanity, quite as much as she admired his gallantry. She looked upon him also as of lower rank, kindly patronized by her father, but not to be treated as upon an equal footing. He might be of any rank, for all that was known; but he must be taken to belong to those who had brought him up and fed him. Janetta was a lively girl, of quick perception and some discretion, though she often talked much nonsense. She was rather proud of her position, and somewhat disdainful of uneducated folk; though (thanks to her father) Lyth was not one of these. Possibly love (if she had felt it) would have swept away such barriers; but Robin was grateful to his patron, and, knowing his own place in life, would rightly have thought it a mean return to attempt to inveigle the daughter. So they liked one another—but nothing more. It was not, therefore, for his sake only, but for her father's, and that of the place, that Miss Upround now was anxious. For days and days she had watched the sea with unusual forebodings, knowing that a great importation was toward, and pretty sure to lead

to blows, after so much preparation. With feminine zeal, she detested poor Carroway, whom she regarded as a tyrant and a spy; and she would have clapped her hands at beholding the three cruisers run upon a shoal, and there stick fast. And as for King George, she had never believed that he was the proper king of England. There were many staunch Jacobites still in Yorkshire, and especially the bright young ladies.

To-night, at least, the coast was likely to be uninvaded. Smugglers, even if their own forces would make breach upon the day of rest, durst not outrage the piety of the land, which would only deal with kegs indoors. The coastguard, being for the most part southerns, splashed about as usual—a far more heinous sin against the Word of God than smuggling. It is the manner of Yorkshiremen to think for themselves, with boldness, in the way they are brought up to: and they made it a point of serious doubt whether the orders of the King himself could set aside the Fourth Commandment, though his arms were over it.

Dr. Upround's daughter, as she watched the sea, felt sure that, even if the goods were ready, no attempt at landing would be made

that night, though something might be done in the morning. But even that was not very likely; because (as seemed to be widely known), the venture was a very large one, and the landers would require a whole night's work to get entirely through with it.

"I wish it was over, one way or the other," she kept on saying to herself, as she gazed at the dark weary lifting of the sea; "it keeps one unsettled as the waves themselves. Sunday always makes me feel restless, because there is so little to do. It is wicked, I suppose; but how can I help it? Why, there is a boat, I do declare! Well, even a boat is welcome, just to break this grey monotony. What boat can it be? None of ours, of course. And what can they want with our Church Cave? I hope they understand its dangers."

Although the wind was not upon the shore, and no long rollers were setting in, short, uncomfortable, clumsy waves were lolloping under the steep grey cliffs, and casting up splashes of white here and there. To enter that cave is a risky thing, except at very favourable times, and even then some experience is needed, for the rocks around it are

like knives, and the boat must generally be backed in, with more use of fender and hook, than of oars. But the people in the boat seemed to understand all that. There were two men rowing, and one steering with an oar, and a fourth standing up, as if to give directions; though in truth he knew nothing about it, but hated even to seem to play second fiddle.

"What a strange thing!" Janetta thought, as she drew behind a rock that they might not see her. "I could almost declare that the man standing up is that most extraordinary gentleman papa preached quite the wrong sermon at. Truly, he deserves the Ahab one, for spying our caves out on a Sunday. He must be a smuggler, after all, or a very crafty agent of the Revenue. Well, I never! That old man steering, as sure as I live, is Robin Cockscroft, by the scarlet handkerchief round his head. Oh, Robin, Robin! could I ever have believed that you would break the Sabbath so? But the boat is not Robin's. What boat can it be? I have not stayed away from church for nothing. One of the men rowing has got no legs, when the boat goes up and down. It

must be that villain of a tipsy Joe, who used to keep the 'Monument.' I heard that he was come back again, to stump for his beer as usual: and his son, that sings like the big church-bell, and has such a very fine face and one leg—why, he is the man that pulls the other oar. Was there ever such a boat-load? But they know what they are doing."

Truly it was, as the young lady said, an extraordinary boat's crew. Old Robin Cockscroft, with a fringe of silver hair escaping from the crimson silk, which he valued so much more than it, and his face still grand (in spite of wrinkles and some weakness of the eyes), keenly understanding every wave, its character, temper, and complexity of influence; as only a man can understand, who has for his life stood over them. Then tugging at the oars, or rather dipping them with a short well-practised plunge, and very little toil of body, two ancient sailors, one considerably older than the other, inasmuch as he was his father, yet chips alike from a sturdy block, and fitted up with jury-stumps. Old Joe pulled rather the better oar, and called his son "a one-legged fiddler," when he missed the dip of wave; while Mordacks stood with

his legs apart, and playing the easy part of critic, had his sneers at both of them. But they let him gibe to his liking; because they knew their work, and he did not. And, upon the whole, they went merrily.

The only one with any doubt concerning the issue of the job, was the one who knew most about it, and that was Robin Cockscroft. He doubted not about want of strength, or skill, or discipline of his oars, but because the boat was not Flamburian, but borrowed from a collier round the Head. No Flamborough boat would ever think of putting to sea on a Sunday, unless it were to save human life; and it seemed to him that no strange boat could find her way into the native caves. He doubted also whether, even with the pressure of strong motive put upon him, which was not of money, it was a godly thing on his part to be steering in his Sunday clothes; and he feared to hear of it thereafter. But being in for it, he must do his utmost.

With genuine skill and solid patience, the entrance of the cave was made, and the boat was lost to Janetta's view. She as well was lost in the deeper cavern of great wonder,

and waited long, and much desired to wait even longer, to see them issue forth again, and learn what they could have been after. But the mist out of which they had come, and inside of which they would rather have remained perhaps, now thickened over land and sea, and groping dreamily for something to lay hold of, found a solid stay and rest-hold in the jagged headlands here. Here accordingly the coilings of the wandering forms began to slide into strait layers, and soft settlement of vapour. Loops of hanging moisture marked the hollows of the land-front, or the alleys of the waning light; and then the mass abandoned outline, fused its shades to pulp, and melted into one great blur of rain. Janetta thought of her Sunday frock, forgot the boat, and sped away for home.

CHAPTER XIII.

TACTICS OF ATTACK.

"I AM sorry to be troublesome, Mynheer Van Dunck; but I cannot say good-bye without having your receipt in full for the old bilander."

"Goot, it is vere goot, Meester Lyth; you are te goot man for te pisness."

With these words the wealthy merchant of the Zuyder Zee drew forth his ancient inkhorn, smeared with the dirt of countless contracts, and signed an acquittance which the smuggler had prepared. But he signed it with a sigh, as a man declares that a favourite horse must go at last; sighing, not for the money, but the memories that go with it. Then as the wind began to pipe, and the roll of the sea grew heavier, the solid Dutchman was lowered carefully into his shore-boat,

and drew the apron over his great and gouty legs.

"I vos married in dat zhips," he shouted back, with his ponderous fist wagging up at Robin Lyth. "Dis taime you will have de bad luck, sir."

"Well, Mynheer, you have only to pay the difference, and the ketch will do; the bilander sails almost as fast."

But Master Van Dunck only heaved another sigh, and felt that his leather bag was safe and full in his breeches pocket. Then he turned his eyes away, and relieved his mind by swearing at his men.

Now this was off the Isle of Texel, and the time was Sunday morning, the very same morning which saw the general factor sitting to be preached at. The flotilla of free trade was putting forth upon its great emprise, and Van Dunck (who had been ship's husband) came to speed them from their moorings.

He took no risk, and to him it mattered little, except as a question of commission; but still he enjoyed the relish of breaking English law most heartily. He hated England, as a loyal Dutchman, for generations, was compelled to do; and he held that a

the foine judge me father was come down till me—honey, don't be narvous; slope it well then—a little thick is it? All the richer for that same, me boy. Commander, here's the good health of his Majesty—Oh Lord!"

Mr. Corkoran Donovan fell down upon the shingle, and rolled and bellowed—"Sure me inside's out! 'Tis poisoned I am, every mortial bit o' me. A dochtor, a dochtor, and a praste, to kill me! That ever I should live to die like this! Ochone, ochone, every bit of me; to be brought forth upon good whisky, and go out of the world upon dochtor's stuff!"

"Most folk does that, when they ought to turn ends 'totherwise;" Bill Brown of Grimsby could see how things were going, though his power to aid was restricted by a double turn of rope around him; but a kind hand had given him a pipe, and his manner was to take things easily. "Commander, or captain, or whatever you be, with your king's clothes, constructing a hole in they flints, never you fear, sir. 'Tis medical water; and your own wife wouldn't know you to-morrow. Your complexion will be like a hangel's."

"You d——d rogue," cried Nettlebones, striding up, with his sword flashing in the

link-lights, " if ever I had a mind to cut any man down—"

" Well, sir, do it then upon a roped man; if the honour of the British navy calleth for it. My will is made, and my widow will have action; and the executioner of my will is a Grimsby man, with a pile of money made in the line of salt fish, and such like."

" Brown, you are a brave man. I would scorn to harm you. Now, upon your honour, are all your puncheons filled with that stuff, and nothing else?"

" Upon my word of honour, sir, they are. Some a little weaker, some with more bilge-water in it, or a trifle of a dash from the midden. The main of it, however, in the very same condition as a' bubbleth out of what they call the spawses. Why, captain, you must a' lived long enough to know, partikkler if gifted with a family, that no sort of spirit as were ever stilled will fetch so much money by the gallon, duty paid, as the doctor's stuff doth by the phial-bottle."

" That is true enough; but no lies, Brown, particularly when upon your honour! If you were importing doctor's stuff, why did you lead us such a dance, and stand fire?"

"Well, your Honour, you must promise not to be offended, if I tell you of a little mistake we made. We heared a sight of talk about some pirate-craft as hoisteth his Majesty's flag upon their villany. And when first you come up, in the dusk of the night—"

"You are the most impudent rogue I ever saw. Show your bills of lading, sir. You know his Majesty's revenue-cruisers, as well as I know your smuggling tub."

"Ship's papers are aboard of her, all correct, sir. Keys at your service, if you please to feel my pocket, objecting to let my hands loose."

"Very well, I must go on board of her, and test a few of your puncheons and bales, Master Brown. Locker in the Master's own cabin, I suppose?"

"Yes, sir, plain as can be on the starboard side just behind the cabin-door. Only your Honour must be smart about it; the time-fuse cant a'got three inches left."

"Time-fuse? What do you mean, you Grimsby villain?"

"Nothing, commander, but to keep you out of mischief. When we were compelled to beach the old craft, for fear of them scoun-

drelly pirates, it came into my head what a pity it would be to have her used illegal; for she do outsail a'most everything, as your Honour can bear witness. So I just laid a half-hour fuse to three big powder-barrels as is down there in the hold; and I expect to see a blow-up almost every moment. But your Honour might be in time yet, with a run, and good luck to your foot, you might—"

"Back, lads, back every one of you this moment!" The first concern of Nettlebones was rightly for his men. "Under the cliff here! Keep well back. Push out those smuggler fellows into the middle. Let them have the benefit of their own inventions, and this impudent Brown the foremost. They have laid a train to their powder-barrels, and the lugger will blow up any moment."

"No fear for me, commander," Bill Brown shouted through the hurry and jostle of a hundred runaways. "More fear for that poor man as lieth there a'lurching. She won't hit me when she bloweth up, no more than your Honour could. But surely your duty demandeth of you to board the old bilander, and take samples."

"Sample enough of you, my friend. But I haven't quite done with you yet. Simpson, here bear a hand with poor Lieutenant Donovan."

Nettlebones set a good example by lifting the prostrate Irishman; and they bore him into safety, and drew up there; while the beachmen, forbidden the shelter at point of cutlass, made off right and left; and then with a crash, that shook the strand and drove back the water in a white turmoil, the "Crown of Gold" flew into a fount of timbers, splinters, shreds, smoke, fire, and dust.

"Gentlemen, you may come out of your holes," the Grimsby man shouted from his mooring-post, as the echoes ran along the cliffs, and rolled to and fro in the distance. "My old woman will miss a piece of my pigtail, but she hathn't hurt her old skipper else. She blowed up handsome, and no mistake! No more danger, gentlemen, and plenty of stuff to pick up afore next pay-day."

"What shall we do with that insolent hound?" Nettlebones asked poor Donovan, who was groaning in slow convalescence. "We have caught him in nothing. We can-

not commit him; we cannot even duck him legally."

"Be jabers, let him drink his health in his own potheen."

"Capital! Bravo for old Ireland, my friend! You shall see it done and handsomely. Brown, you recommend these waters; so you shall have a dose of them."

A piece of old truncate kelp was found, as good a drinking-horn as need be; and with this Captain Brown was forced to swallow half a bucketful of his own "medical water;" and they left him fast at his moorings, to reflect upon this form of importation.

CHAPTER XV.

BEARDED IN HIS DEN.

"What do you think of it by this time, Bowler?" Commander Nettlebones asked his second, who had been left in command afloat, and to whom they rowed back in a wrathful mood, with a good deal of impression that the fault was his: "You have been taking it easily out here. What do you think of the whole of it?"

"I have simply obeyed your orders, sir; and if I am to be blamed for that, I had better offer no opinion."

"No, no, I am finding no fault with you. Don't be so tetchy, Bowler. I seek your opinion, and you are bound to give it."

"Well, then, sir, my opinion is that they have made fools of the lot of us, excepting, of course, my superior officer."

"You think so, Bowler? Well, and so do I—and myself the biggest fool of any. They have charged our centre with a dummy cargo, while they run the real stuff far on either flank. Is that your opinion?"

"To a nicety, that is my opinion, now that you put it so clearly, sir."

"The trick is a clumsy one, and never should succeed. Carroway ought to catch one lot, if he has a haporth of sense in him. What is the time now; and how is the wind?"

"I hear a church clock striking twelve; and by the moon it must be that. The wind is still from the shore, but veering, and I felt a flaw from the east just now."

"If the wind works round, our turn will come. Is Donovan fit for duty yet?"

"Ten times fit, sir—to use his own expression. He is burning to have at somebody. His eyes work about like the binnacle's card."

"Then board him, and order him to make all sail for Burlington; and see what old Carroway is up to. You be off for Whitby, and as far as Teesmouth, looking into every cove you pass. I shall stand off and on from this to Scarborough, and as far as

Filey. Short measures, mind, if you come across them! If I nab that fellow Lyth, I shall go near to hanging him as a felon-outlaw. His trick is a little too outrageous."

"No fear, commander. If it is as we suppose, it is high time to make a strong example."

Hours had been lost, as the captains of the cruisers knew too well by this time. Robin Lyth's stratagem had duped them all, while the contraband cargoes might be landed safely, at either extremity of their beat. By the aid of the fishing-boats, he had learned their manœuvres clearly, and outmanœuvred them.

Now, it would have been better for him, perhaps, to have been content with a lesser triumph, and to run his own schooner the "Glimpse" further south, towards Hornsea, or even Aldbrough. Nothing, however, would satisfy him but to land his fine cargo at Carroway's own door—a piece of downright insolence, for which he paid out most bitterly. A man of his courage, and lofty fame, should have been above such vindictive feelings. But, as it was, he cherished and, alas, indulged a certain small grudge against the bold lieutenant, scarcely so much for en-

deavouring to shoot him, as for entrapping him at Byrsa Cottage, during the very sweetest moment of his life. "You broke in disgracefully," said the smuggler to himself, "upon my privacy when it should have been most sacred. The least thing I can do is to return your visit, and pay my respects to Mrs. Carroway, and your interesting family."

Little expecting such a courtesy as this, the vigilant officer was hurrying about, here, there, and almost everywhere (except in the right direction), at one time by pinnace, at another upon horseback, or on his unwearied though unequal feet. He carried his sword in one hand, and his spy-glass in the other, and at every fog he swore so hard, that he seemed to turn it yellow. With his heart worn almost into holes, as an over-mangled quilt is, by burdensome roll of perpetual lies, he condemned, with a round mouth, smugglers, cutters, the coast-guard and the coast itself, the weather, and with a deeper depth of condemnation, the farmers, landladies, and fishermen. For all of these verily seemed to be in league to play him the game which schoolboys play with a gentle-faced new-comer—the game of "send the fool further."

John Gristhorp, of the "Ship Inn," at Filey, had turned out his visitors, barred his door, and was counting his money by the fireside, with his wife grumbling at him for such late hours as half-past ten of the clock in the bar, that night when the poor bilander ended her long career as aforesaid. Then a thundering knock at the door just fastened made him upset a little pyramid of pence, and catch up the iron candlestick.

"None of your roystering here!" cried the lady. "John, you know better than to let them in, I hope."

"Copper coomth by daa, goold coomth t'naight-time," the sturdy publican answered, though resolved to learn who it was, before unbarring.

"In the name of the King, undo this door," a deep stern voice resounded, "or by Royal command we make splinters of it."

"It is that horrible Carroway again," whispered Mrs. Gristhorp. "Much gold comes of him, I doubt. Let him in if you dare, John."

"'Keep ma oot, if ye de-arr,'" saith he; "Ah'll awand here's the tail o' it."

While Gristhorp, in wholesome fealty to his

wife, was doubting, the door flew open, and in marched Carroway and all his men, or at least all save one of his present following. He had ordered his pinnace to meet him here, himself having ridden from Scarborough, and the pinnace had brought the jolly-boat in tow, according to his directions. The men had landed with the jolly-boat, which was handier for beach-work, leaving one of their number to mind the larger craft, while they should refresh themselves. They were nine in all, and Carroway himself the tenth, all sturdy fellows, and for the main of it tolerably honest; Cadman, Ellis, and Dick Hackerbody, and one more man from Bridlington, the rest a reinforcement from Spurn Head, called up for occasion.

"Landlord, produce your best, and quickly," the officer said, as he threw himself into the arm-chair of state, being thoroughly tired. "In one hour's time, we must be off. Therefore John, bring nothing tough, for our stomachs are better than our teeth. A shilling per head is his Majesty's price, and half-a-crown for officers. Now a gallon of ale, to begin with."

Gristhorp, being a prudent man, brought

the very toughest parts of his larder forth, with his wife giving nudge to his elbow. All, and especially Carroway, too hungry for nice criticism, fell to, by the light of three tallow candles, and were just getting into the heart of it, when the rattle of horse-shoes on the pitch-stones shook the wide low window, and a little boy came staggering in, with scanty breath, and dazzled eyes, and a long face pale with hurrying so.

"Why, Tom, my boy!" the lieutenant cried, jumping up so suddenly that he overturned the little table, at which he was feeding by himself, to preserve the proper discipline; "Tom, my darling; what has brought you here? Anything wrong with your mother?"

"Nobody wouldn't come, but me," Carroway's eldest son began to gasp, with his mouth full of crying; "and I borrowed Butcher Hewson's pony, and he's going to charge five shillings for it."

"Never mind that. We shall not have to pay it. But what is it all about, my son?"

"About the men that are landing the things, just opposite our front door, father. They have got seven carts, and a waggon

with three horses, and one of the horses is three colours; and ever so many ponies, more than you could count."

"Well, then, may I be for ever—" here the lieutenant used an expression, which not only was in breach of the third commandment, but might lead his son to think less of the fifth; "if it isn't more than I can bear! To be running a cargo at my own hall-door!" He had a passage, large enough to hang three hats in, which the lady of the house always called "the hall." "Very well, very good, very fine indeed! You sons of—" an animal that is not yet accounted the mother of the human race, "have you done guzzling and swizzling?"

The men who were new to his orders jumped up, for they liked his expressions, by way of a change; but the Bridlington squad stuck to their trenchers. "Ready in five minutes, sir;" said Cadman, with a glance neither loving nor respectful.

"If ever there was an old hog for the trough, the name of him is John Cadman. In ten minutes, lads, we must all be afloat."

"One more against you," muttered Cadman; and a shrewd quiet man from Spurn

Head, Adam Andrews, heard him, and took heed of him.

While the men of the Coast-guard were hurrying down, to make ready the jolly-boat, and hail the pinnace, Carroway stopped to pay the score, and to give his son some beer and meat. The thirsty little fellow drained his cup, and filled his mouth and both hands with food, while the landlady picked out the best bits for him.

"Don't talk, my son, don't try to talk," said Carroway, looking proudly at him, while the boy was struggling to tell his adventures, without loss of feeding-time; "you are a chip of the old block, Tom, for victualling, and for riding too. Kind madam, you never saw such a boy before. Mark my words, he will do more in the world than ever his father did, and his father was pretty well known in his time, in the Royal Navy, ma'am. To have stuck to his horse all that way in the dark, was wonderful, perfectly wonderful. And the horse blows more than the rider, ma'am, which is quite beyond my experience! Now, Tom, ride home very carefully and slowly, if you feel quite equal to it. The Lord has watched over you, and He will continue, as He

does with brave folk that do their duty. Half-a-crown you shall have, all for yourself, and the sixpenny boat that you longed for in the shops. Keep out of the way of the smugglers, Tom, don't let them even clap eyes on you. Kiss me, my son, I am proud of you."

Little Tom long remembered this; and his mother cried over it hundreds of times.

Although it was getting on for midnight now, Master Gristhorp and his wife came out into the road before their house, to see the departure of their guests. And this they could do well, because the moon had cleared all the fog away, and was standing in a good part of the sky for throwing clear light upon Filey. Along the uncovered ridge of shore, which served for a road, and was better than a road, the boy and the pony grew smaller; while upon the silvery sea the same thing happened to the pinnace, with her white sails bending, and her six oars glistening.

"The world goeth up, and the world goeth down," said the lady with her arms akimbo; "and the moon goeth over the whole of us, John; but to my heart I do pity poor folk, as canna count the time to have the sniff of their own blankets."

"Margery, I loikes the moon, as young as ever ye da. But I sooner see the snuff of our own taller, agoing out, fra' the bed curtings."

Shaking their heads with concrete wisdom, they managed to bar the door again, and blessing their stars that they did not often want them, took shelter beneath the quiet canopy of bed. And when they heard by-and-by, what had happened, it cost them a week apiece to believe it; because with their own eyes they had seen everything so peaceable, and had such a good night afterwards.

When a thing is least expected, then it loves to comes to pass, and then it is enjoyed the most, whatever good there is of it. After the fog and the slur of the day, to see the sky at all was joyful, although there was but a white moon upon it, and faint stars gliding hazily. And it was a great point for every man to be satisfied as to where he was; because that helps him vastly towards being satisfied to be there. The men in the pinnace could see exactly where they were in this world; and as to the other world, their place was fixed—if discipline be an abiding gift—by the stern precision of their Commander in

ordering the lot of them to the devil. They carried all sail, and they pulled six oars, and the wind and sea ran after them.

"Ha! I see something!" Carroway cried, after a league or more of swearing. "Dick, the night-glass! my eyes are sore. What do you make her out for?"

"Sir, she is the Spurn-Head yawl," answered Dick Hackerbody, who was famed for long sight, but could see nothing with a telescope. "I can see the patch of her fore-sail."

"She is looking for us. We are the wrong way of the moon. Ship oars, lads; bear up for her."

In ten minutes' time the two boats came to speaking distance off Bempton Cliffs, and the windmill, that vexed Willie Anerley so, looked bare and black on the highland. There were only two men in the Spurn-Head boat, not half enough to manage her. "Well! what is it?" shouted Carroway.

"Robin Lyth has made his land-fall on Burlington sands, opposite your Honour's door, sir. There was only two of us to stop him, and the man as is deaf and dumb."

"I know it," said Carroway, too wroth to

swear. "My boy of eight years old is worth the entire boiling of you. You got into a rabbit-hole, and ran to tell your mammy."

"Captain, I never had no mammy," the other man answered, with his feelings hurt; "I come to tell you, sir; and something if you please for your own ear, if agreeable."

"Nothing is agreeable. But let me have it. Hold on, I will come aboard of you."

The lieutenant stepped into the Spurn-Head boat with confident activity, and ordered his own to haul off a little; while the stranger bent down to him in the stern, and whispered.

"Now are you quite certain of this?" asked Carroway, with his grim face glowing in the moonlight. "I have had such a heap of cock and bulls about it. Morcom, are you certain?"

"As certain, sir, as that I stand here, and you sit there, commander. Put me under guard, with a pistol to my ear, and shoot me, if it turns out to be a lie."

"The Dove-cot, you say? You are quite sure of that, and not the Kirk-cave, or Lyth's Hole."

"Sir, the Dove-cot, and no other. I had it

from my own young brother, who has been cheated of his share. And I know it from my own eyes too."

"Then by the Lord in heaven, Morcom, I shall have my revenge at last; and I shall not stand upon niceties. If I call for the jolly-boat, you step in. I doubt if either of these will enter."

It was more than a fortnight since the lieutenant had received the attentions of a barber, and when he returned to his own boat, and changed her course inshore, he looked most bristly even in the moonlight. The sea, and the moon, between them gave quite light enough to show how gaunt he was—the aspect of a man who cannot thrive, without his children to make play, and his wife to do cookery for him.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE DOVE-COT.

WITH the tiller in his hand, the brave lieutenant meditated sadly. There was plenty of time for thought before quick action would be needed; although the Dove-cot was so near that no boat could come out of it unseen. For the pinnace was fetching a circuit, so as to escape the eyes of any sentinel, if such there should be at the mouth of the cavern, and to come upon the inlet suddenly. And the two other revenue-boats were in her wake.

The wind was slowly veering towards the east, as the Grimsby man had predicted, with no sign of any storm as yet, but rather a prospect of winterly weather, and a breeze to bring the woodcocks in. The gentle rise and fall of waves, or rather perhaps of the tidal

flow, was chequered and veined with a ripple of the slanting breeze, and twinkled in the moonbeams. For the moon was brightly mounting towards her zenith, and casting bastions of rugged cliff in gloomy largeness on the mirror of the sea. Hugging these as closely as their peril would allow, Carroway ordered silence, and with the sense of coming danger, thought.

"Probably I shall kill this man. He will scarcely be taken alive, I fear. He is as brave as myself, or braver; and in his place I would never yield. If he were a Frenchman, it would be all right. But I hate to kill a gallant Englishman. And such a pretty girl, and a good girl too, loves him with all her heart, I know. And that good old couple, who depend upon him, and who have had such shocking luck themselves! He has been a bitter plague to me, and often I have longed to strike him down. But to-night—I cannot tell why it is—I wish there were some way out of it. God knows that I would give up the money, and give up my thief-catching business too, if the honour of the service let me. But duty drives me; do it I must. And after all, what is life to a man who is young,

and has no children? Better over, better done with, before the troubles and the disappointment come, the weariness, and the loss of power, and the sense of growing old, and seeing the little ones hungry. Life is such a fleeting vapour—I smell some man sucking peppermint! The smell of it goes on the wind for a mile. Oh! Cadman again as usual. Peppermint in the Royal Coastguard! Away with it, you ancient beldame!"

Muttering something about his bad tooth, the man flung his lozenge away; and his eyes flashed fire in the moonlight, while the rest grinned a low grin at him. And Adam Andrews, sitting next him, saw him lay hand upon his musketoon.

"Are your firelocks all primed, my lads?" the commander asked, quite as if he had seen him, although he had not been noticing; and the foremost to answer "Ay, ay, sir," was Cadman.

"Then be sure that you fire not, except at my command. We will take them without shedding blood, if it may be. But happen what will, we must have Lyth."

With these words, Carroway drew his sword,

and laid it on the bench beside him; and the rest (who would rather use steel than powder) felt that their hangers were ready. Few of them wished to strike at all; for vexed as they were with the smugglers for having outwitted them so often, as yet there was no bad blood between them, such as must be quenched with death. And some of them had friends, and even relatives, among the large body of free-traders, and counted it too likely that they might be here.

Meanwhile in the cave there was rare work going on, speedily, cleverly, and with a merry noise. There was only one boat with a crew of six men, besides Robin Lyth the captain; but the six men made noise enough for twelve, and the echoes made it into twice enough for any twenty-four. The crew were trusty, hardy fellows, who liked their joke, and could work with it; and Robin Lyth knew them too well to attempt any high authority of gagging. The main of their cargo was landed and gone inland, as snugly as need be; and having kept beautifully sober over that, they were taking the liberty of beginning to say, or rather sip, the grace of the fine indulgence due to them.

Pleasant times make pleasant scenes, and everything now was fair and large in this happy cave of freedom. Lights of bright resin were burning, with strong flare and fume, upon shelves of rock; dark water softly went lapping round the sides, having dropped all rude habits at the entrance; and a pulse of quiet rise and fall opened, and spread to the discovery of light, tremulous fronds and fans of kelp. The cavern, expanding and mounting from the long narrow gut of its inlet, shone with staves of snowy crag wherever the scour of the tide ran round; bulged and scooped, or peaked and fissured, and sometimes beautifully sculptured by the pliant tools of water. Above the tide-reach darker hues prevailed, and more jagged outline, tufted here and there with yellow, where the lichen freckles spread. And the vault was framed of mountain fabric, massed with ponderous gray slabs.

All below was limpid water, or at any rate not very muddy, but as bright as need be for the time of year, and a sea which is not tropical. No one may hope to see the bottom, through ten feet of water, on the Yorkshire coast, towards the end of the month of November;

but still it tries to look clear upon occasion; and here in the caves it settles down, after even a week free from churning. And perhaps the fog outside had helped it to look clearer inside; for the larger world has a share of the spirit of contrariety intensified in man.

Be that as it may, the water was too clear for any hope of sinking tubs deeper than Preventive eyes could go; and the very honest fellows who were labouring here had not brought any tubs to sink. All such coarse gear was shipped off inland, as they vigorously expressed it; and what they were concerned with now was the cream and the jewel of their enterprise.

The sea reserved exclusive right of way around the rocky sides, without even a niche for human foot, so far as a stranger could perceive. At the furthermost end of the cave, however, the craggy basin had a lip of flinty pebbles, and shelly sand. This was no more than a very narrow shelf, just enough for a bather to plunge from; but it ran across the broad end of the cavern, and from its southern corner went a deep dry fissure mounting out of sight into the body of the cliff. And here the smugglers were merrily at work.

The nose of their boat was run high upon the shingle; two men on board of her were passing out the bales, while the other four received them, and staggered with them up the cranny. Captain Lyth himself was in the stern-sheets, sitting calmly, but ordering everything, and jotting down the numbers. Now and then the gentle wash was lifting the brown timbers, and swelling with a sleepy gush of hushing murmurs out of sight. And now and then the heavy vault was echoing with some sailor's song.

There was only one more bale to land, and that the most precious of the whole, being all pure lace most closely packed in a waterproof enclosure. Robin Lyth himself was ready to indulge in a careless song. For this, as he had promised Mary, was to be his last illegal act. Henceforth, instead of defrauding the revenue, he would most loyally cheat the public, as every reputable tradesman must. How could any man serve his time more notably, towards shop-keeping, and pave fairer way into the corporation of a grandly corrupt old English town, than by long graduation of free-trade? And Robin was yet too young and careless to know that he could not endure

dull work. "How pleasant, how comfortable, how secure," he was saying to himself, "it will be! I shall hardly be able to believe that I ever lived in hardship."

But the great laws of human nature were not to be baulked so. Robin Lyth, the prince of smugglers, and the type of hardihood, was never to wear a grocer's apron, was never to be "licensed to sell tea, coffee, tobacco, pepper, and snuff." For while he indulged in this vain dream, and was lifting his last most precious bale, a surge of neither wind nor tide, but of hostile invasion, washed the rocks, and broke beneath his feet.

In a moment all his wits returned, all his plenitude of resource, and unequalled vigour, and coolness. With his left hand—for he was as ambidexter as a brave writer of this age requires—he caught up a handspike, and hurled it so truly along the line of torches that only two were left to blink; with his right he flung the last bale upon the shelf; then leaped out after it, and hurried it away. Then he sprang into the boat again, and held an oar in either hand.

"In the name of the king, surrender," shouted Carroway, standing, tall and grim, in

the bow of the pinnace, which he had skilfully driven through the entrance, leaving the other boats outside. "We are three to one, we have muskets, and a cannon. In the name of the king, surrender."

"In the name of the devil, splash!" cried Robin, suiting the action to the word, striking the water with both broad blades, while his men snatched oars, and did the same. A whirl of flashing water filled the cave, as if with a tempest, soaked poor Carroway, and drenched his sword, and deluged the priming of the hostile guns. All was uproar, turmoil, and confusion thrice confounded; no man could tell where he was, and the grappling boats reeled to and fro.

"Club your muskets, and at 'em!" cried the lieutenant, mad with rage, as the gunwale of his boat swung over. "Their blood be upon their own heads; draw your hangers, and at 'em."

He never spoke another word, but furiously leaping at the smuggler-chief, fell back into his own boat, and died, without a syllable, without a groan. The roar of a gun and the smoke of powder mingled with the watery hubbub, and hushed in a moment all the oaths of conflict.

The revenue-men drew back and sheathed their cutlasses, and laid down their guns; some looked with terror at one another, and some at their dead commander. His body lay across the heel of the mast, which had been unstepped at his order; and a heavy drip of blood was weltering into a ring upon the floor.

For several moments no one spoke, or moved, or listened carefully; but the fall of the poor lieutenant's death-drops, like the ticking of a clock, went on. Until an old tar, who had seen a sight of battles, crooked his leg across a thwart, and propped up the limp head upon his doubled knee.

"Dead as a door-nail," he muttered, after laying his ear to the lips, and one hand on the too impetuous heart. "Who takes command? This is a hanging job, I'm thinking."

There was nobody to take command, not even a petty officer. The command fell to the readiest mind, as it must in such catastrophes. "Jem, you do it," whispered two or three; and being so elected, he was clear.

"Lay her broadside on to the mouth of the cave. Not a man stirs out without killing

me," old Jem shouted; and to hear a plain voice was sudden relief to most of them. In the wavering dimness they laid the pinnace across the narrow entrance, while the smugglers huddled all together in their boat. "Burn two blue lights," cried old Jem, and it was done.

"I'm not going to speechify to any cursed murderers," the old sailor said, with a sense of authority, which made him use mild language; "but take heed of one thing, I'll blow you all to pieces with this here four-pounder, without you strikes peremptory."

The brilliance of the blue lights filled the cavern, throwing out everybody's attitude and features, especially those of the dead lieutenant. "A fine job you have made of it this time!" said Jem.

They were beaten, they surrendered, they could scarcely even speak, to assert their own innocence of such a wicked job. They submitted to be bound, and cast down into their boat, imploring only that it might be there—that they might not be taken to the other boat and laid beside the corpse of Carroway.

"Let the white-livered cowards have their way," the old sailor said contemptuously.

"Put their captain on the top of them. Now, which is Robin Lyth?"

The lights were burned out, and the cave was dark again, except where a slant of moonlight came through a fissure upon the southern side. The smugglers muttered something, but they were not heeded.

"Never mind, make her fast, fetch her out, you lubbers. We shall see him well enough, when we get outside."

But in spite of all their certainty, they failed of this. They had only six prisoners, and not one of them was Lyth.

CHAPTER XVII.

LITTLE CARROWAYS.

Mrs. Carroway was always glad to be up quite early in the morning. But some few mornings seemed to slip in between whiles, when, in accordance with human nature, and its operations in the baby-stage, even Lauta Carroway failed to be about the world before the sun himself. Whenever this happened she was slightly cross, from the combat of conscience and self-assertion, which fly at one another, worse than any dog and cat. Geraldine knew that her mother was put out, if any one of the household durst go down the stairs before her. And yet if Geraldine herself held back, and followed the example of late minutes, she was sure "to catch it worse," as the poor child expressed it.

If any active youth with a very small in-

come (such as an active youth is pretty sure to have) wants a good wife, and has the courage to set out with one, his proper course is to choose the eldest daughter of a numerous family. When the others come thickly, this daughter of the house gets worked down into a wonderful perfection of looking after others, while she overlooks herself. Such a course is even better for her than to have a step-mother; which also is a goodly thing, but sometimes leads to sourness. Whereas no girl of any decent staple can revolt against her duty to her own good mother, and the proud sense of fostering and working for the little ones. Now Geraldine was wise in all these ways, and pleased to be called the little woman of the house.

The baby had been troublous in the night, and scant of reason, as the rising race can be, even while so immature; and after being up with it, and herself producing a long series of noises—which lead to peace, through the born desire of contradiction—the mother fell asleep at last, perhaps from simple sympathy, and slept beyond her usual hour. But instead of being grateful for this, she was angry and bitter to any one awake before her.

"I cannot tell why it is," she said to Geraldine, who was toasting a herring for her brothers and sisters, and enjoying the smell (which was all that she would get), "but perpetually now you stand exactly like your father. There is every excuse for your father, because he is an officer, and has been knocked about, as he always is; but there is no excuse for you, miss. Put your heel decently under your dress. If we can afford nothing else, we can surely afford to behave well."

The child made no answer; but tucked her heel in, and went on toasting nobly, while she counted the waves on the side of the herring, where his ribs should have been, if he were not too fat; and she mentally divided him into seven pieces; not one of which, alas, would be for hungry Geraldine. "Tom must have two after being out all night," she was saying to herself; "and to grudge him would be greedy. But the bit of skin upon the toasting-fork will be for me, I am almost sure."

"Geraldine, the least thing you can do, when I speak to you, is to answer. This morning you are in a most provoking temper, and giving yourself the most intolerable airs. And who gave you leave to do your hair like

that? One would fancy that you were some rising court-beauty, or a child of the nobility at the very least, instead of a plain little thing that has to work, or at any rate that ought to work, to help its poor mother! Oh, now you are going to cry, I suppose. Let me see a tear, and you shall go to bed again."

"Oh, mother, mother, now, what do you think has happened?" little Tom shouted as he rushed in from the beach; "father has caught all the smugglers, every one, and the 'Royal George' is coming home before a spanking breeze with three boats behind her, and they can't be all ours; and one of them must belong to Robin Lyth himself; and I would almost bet a penny they have been and shot him; though everybody said that he never could be shot. Jerry, come and look; never mind the old fish. I never did see such a sight in all my life. They have got the jib-sail on him, so he must be dead at last; and instead of half-a-crown, I am sure to get a guinea. Come along, Jerry, and perhaps I'll give you some of it."

"Tommy," said his mother, "you are always so impetuous! I never will believe in such good luck until I see it. But you have

been a wonderfully good, brave boy, and your father may thank you for whatever he has done. I shall not allow Geraldine to go; for she is not a good child this morning. And of course I cannot go myself, for your father will come home absolutely starving. And it would not be right for the little ones to go, if things are at all as you suppose. Now if I let you go yourself, you are not to go beyond the flagstaff. Keep far away from the boats, remember; unless your father calls for you to run on any errand. All the rest of you go in here, with your bread and milk; and wait until I call you."

Mrs. Carroway locked all the little ones in a room from which they could see nothing of the beach; with orders to Cissy, the next girl, to feed them, and keep them all quiet till she came again. But while she was busy, with a very lively stir, to fetch out whatever could be found of fatness, or grease, that could be hoped to turn to gravy in the pan—for Carroway, being so lean, loved fat, and to put a fish before him was an insult to his bones—just at the moment when she had struck oil, in the shape of a very fat chop, from forth a stew, which had beaten all the children by *stearine*

inertia—then at this moment, when she was rejoicing, the latch of the door clicked, and a man came in.

"Whoever you are, you seem to me to make yourself very much at home," the lady said sharply, without turning round, because she supposed it to be a well-accustomed enemy, armed with that odious "little bill." The intruder made no answer, and she turned to rate him thoroughly; but the petulance of her eyes drew back before the sad stern gaze of his. "Who are you, and what do you want?" she asked, with a yellow dish in one hand, and a frying-pan in the other. "Geraldine, come here; that man looks wild."

Her visitor did look wild enough, but without any menace in his sorrowful dark eyes. "Can't the man speak?" she cried. "Are you mad or starving? We are not very rich; but we can give you bread, poor fellow. Captain Carroway will be at home directly, and he will see what can be done for you."

"Have you not heard of the thing that has been done?" the young man asked her, word by word, and staying himself with one hand upon the dresser, because he was trembling dreadfully.

"Yes, I have heard of it all. They have shot the smuggler, Robin Lyth, at last. I am very sorry for him. But it was needful; and he had no family."

"Lady, I am Robin Lyth. I have not been shot; nor even shot at. The man that has been shot, I know not how, instead of me, was—was somebody quite different. With all my heart, I wish it had been me; and no more trouble."

He looked at the mother, and the little girl, and sobbed, and fell upon a salting stool, which was to have been used that morning. Then, while Mrs. Carroway stood bewildered, Geraldine ran up to him, and took his hand, and said, "Don't cry. My papa says that men never cry. And I am so glad that you were not shot."

"See me kiss her," said Robin Lyth, as he laid his lips upon the child's fair forehead. "If I had done it, could I do that? Darling, you will remember this. Madam, I am hunted like a mad dog, and shall be hanged to your flagstaff, if I am caught. I am here to tell you that, as God looks down from heaven upon you and me—I did not do it, I did not even know it."

The smuggler stood up, with his right hand on his heart, and tears rolling manifestly down his cheeks, but his eyes like crystal, clear with truth; and the woman, who knew not that she was a widow, but felt it already with a helpless wonder, answered quietly, "You speak the truth, sir. But what difference can it make to me?" Lyth tried to answer with the same true look; but neither his eyes nor his tongue would serve.

"I shall just go and judge for myself," she said, as if it were a question of marketing, (such bitter defiance came over her,) and she took no more heed of him than if he were a chair; nor even half so much, for she was a great judge of a chair. "Geraldine, go and put your bonnet on. We are going to meet your father. Tell Cissy and all the rest to come but the baby. The baby cannot do it, I suppose. In a minute and a half I shall expect you all—how many? Seven, yes seven of you."

"Seven, mother, yes. And the baby makes it eight; and yesterday you said that he was worth all us together."

Robin Lyth saw that he was no more wanted, or even heeded; and without delay he

quitted such premises of danger. Why should he linger in a spot where he might have violent hands laid on him, and be sped to a premature end, without benefit even of trial by jury? Upon this train of reasoning, he made off.

Without any manner of reasoning at all, but with fierceness of dread, and stupidity of grief, the mother collected her children in silence, from the damsel of ten to the toddler of two. Then, leaving the baby tied down in the cradle, she pulled at the rest of them, on this side and on that, to get them into proper trim of dresses and of hats, as if they were going to be marched off to church. For that all the younger ones made up their minds, and put up their ears for the tinkle of the bell; but the elder children knew that it was worse than that, because their mother never looked at them.

"You will go by the way of the station," she said, for the boats were still out at sea, and no certainty could be made of them; "whatever it is, we may thank the station for it."

The poor little things looked up at her in wonder; and then, acting up to their disci-

pline, set off, in lopsided pairs of a small and a big one, to save any tumbling and cutting of knees. The elder ones walked with discretion, and a strong sense of responsibility, hushed, moreover, by some inkling of a great black thing to meet. But the baby ones prattled, and skipped with their feet, and straggled away towards the pebbles by the path. The mother of them all followed slowly and heavily, holding the youngest by the hand, because of its trouble in getting through the stones. Her heart was nearly choking, but her eyes free and reckless, wandering wildly over earth, and sea, and sky, in vain search of guidance from any, or from all of them.

The pinnace came nearer, with its sad, cold freight. The men took off their hats, and rubbed their eyes, and some of them wanted to back off again; but Mrs. Carroway calmly said, " Please to let me have my husband."

CHAPTER XVIII.

MAIDS AND MERMAIDS.

DAY comes with climbing, night by falling; hence the night is so much swifter. Happiness takes years to build; but misery swoops like an avalanche. Such, and even more depressing, are the thoughts young folk give way to, when their first great trouble rushes and sweeps them into a desert, trackless to the inexperienced hope.

When Mary Anerley heard, by the zealous offices of watchful friends, that Robin Lyth had murdered Captain Carroway ferociously, and had fled for his life across the seas—first wrath at such a lie was followed by persistent misery. She had too much faith in his manly valour, and tender heart, to accept the tale, exactly as it was told to her; but still she could not resist the fear, that in the whirl of

conflict, with life against life, he had dealt the death. And she knew that even such a deed would brand him as a murderer, stamp out all love, and shatter every hope of quiet happiness. The blow to her pride was grievous also; for many a time had she told herself that a noble task lay before her—to rescue from unlawful ways, and redeem to reputable life, the man whose bravery, and other gallant gifts had endeared him to the public and to her. But now, through force of wretched facts, he must be worse than ever.

Her father and mother said never a word upon the subject to her. Mrs. Anerley at first longed to open out, and shed upon the child a mother's sympathy, as well as a mother's scolding; but firmly believing, as she did, the darkest version of the late event, it was better that she should hold her peace, according to her husband's orders.

"Let the lass alone," he said; "a word against that fellow now would make a sight of mischief. Suppose I had shot George Tanfield instead of hiding him soundly when he stuck up to you, why you must have been sorry for me, Sophy. And Mary is sorry for that rogue, no doubt, and believes that he did

it for her sake, I dare say. The womenkind always do think that. If a big thief gets swung for breaking open a cash-box, his lassie will swear he was looking for her thimble. If you was to go now for discoursing of this matter, you would never put up with poor Poppet's account of him, and she would run him higher up, every time you ran him down; ay and believe it too; such is the ways of women."

"Why, Stephen, you make me open up my eyes. I never dreamed you were half so cunning, and of such low opinions!"

"Well, I don't know, only from my own observance. I would scarcely trust myself, not to abuse that fellow. And Sophy, you know you cannot stop your tongue, like me."

"Thank God for that same! He never meant us so to do. But, Stephen, I will follow your advice; because it is my own opinion."

Mary was puzzled by this behaviour; for everything used to be so plain among them. She would even have tried for some comfort from Willie, whose mind was very large upon all social questions. But Willie had solved at last the problem of perpetual motion,

according to his own conviction, and locked himself up with his model all day; and the world might stand still, so long as that went on. "Oh, what would I give for dear Jack!" cried Mary.

Worn out at length with lonely grief, she asked if she might go to Byrsa Cottage, for a change. Even that was refused; though her father's kind heart ached at the necessary denial. Sharp words again had passed between the farmer and the tanner, concerning her; and the former believed that his brother-in-law would even encourage the outlaw still. And for Mary herself now, the worst of it was that she had nothing to lay hold of, in the way of complaint or grievance. It was not like that first estrangement, when her father showed how much he felt it in a hundred ways, and went about everything upside down, and comforted her by his want of comfort. Now it was ten times worse than that; for her father took everything quite easily!

Shocking as it may be, this was true. Stephen Anerley had been through a great many things, since the violence of his love-time; and his views upon such tender subjects were not so tender as they used to be.

With the eyes of wisdom, he looked back, having had his own way in the matter, upon such young sensations as very laudable, but curable. In his own case, he had cured them well, and upon the whole very happily, by a good long course of married life; but having tried that remedy alone, how could he say that there was no better? He remembered how his own miseries had soon subsided, or gone into other grooves, after matrimony. This showed that they were transient, but did not prove such a course to be the only cure for them. Recovering from illness, has any man been known to say that the doctor recovered him?

Mrs. Anerley's views upon the subject were much the same, though modified, of course, by the force of her own experience. She might have had a much richer man than Stephen; and when he was stingy, she reminded him of that; which after a little disturbance, generally terminated in five guineas. And now she was clear that if Mary were not worried, condoled with, or cried over, she would take her own time, and come gradually round, and be satisfied with Harry Tanfield. Harry was a fine young fellow, and worshipped

the ground that Mary walked upon, and it seemed a sort of equity that he should have her, as his father had been disappointed of her mother. Every Sunday morning, he trimmed his whiskers, and put on a wonderful waistcoat; and now he did more, for he bought a new hat, and came to church to look at her.

Oftentimes now, by all these doings, the spirit of the girl was roused, and her courage made ready to fly out in words; but the calm look of the elders stopped her, and then true pride came to her aid. If they chose to say nothing of the matter which was in her heart continually, would she go whining to them about it, and scrape a grain of pity from a cart-load of contempt? One day, as she stood before the swinging-glass,—that present from Aunt Popplewell, which had moved her mother's wrath so—she threw back her shoulders, and smoothed the plaits of her nice little waist, and considered herself. The humour of the moment grew upon her, and crept into indulgence; as she saw what a very fair lass she was, and could not help being proud of it. She saw how the soft rich damask of her cheeks returned at being thought of, and the sparkle

of her sweet blue eyes, and the merry delight of her lips, that made respectable people want to steal a kiss, from the pure enticement of good will.

"I will cry no more, in the nights," she said. "Why should I make such a figure of myself, with nobody to care for it? And here is my hair full of kinkles and neglect! I declare, if he ever came back he would say, 'What a fright you are become, my Mary!' Where is that stuff of Aunt Deborah's, I wonder, that makes her hair like satin? It is high time to leave off being such a dreadful dowdy. I will look as nice as ever, just to let them know that their cruelty has not killed me."

Virtuous resolves commend themselves, and improve with being carried out. She put herself into her very best trim, as simple as a lily, and as perfect as a rose; though the flutter of a sigh or two enlarged her gentle breast. She donned a very graceful hat, adorned with sweet ribbon right skilfully smuggled; and she made up her mind to have the benefit of the air.

The prettiest part of all Anerley Farm, for those who are not farmers, is a soft little

valley, where a brook comes down, and passes from voluntary ruffles into the quiet resignation of a sheltered lake. A pleasant and a friendly little waterspread is here, cheerful to the sunshine, and inviting to the moon, with a variety of gleamy streaks, according to the sky and breeze. Pasture-land, and arable, come sloping to the margin, which instead of being rough and rocky, lips the pool with gentleness. Ins and outs of little bays afford a nice variety, while round the brink are certain trees of a modest and unpretentious bent. These, having risen to a very fair distance towards the sky, come down again, scarcely so much from a doubt of their merits, as through affection to their native land. In summer, they hang, like a permanent shower of green, to refresh the bright water; and in winter, like loose osier-work, or wattles curved for binding.

Under one of the largest of these willows, the runaway Jack had made a seat, whereon to sit, and watch his toy-boat cruising on the inland wave. Often, when Mary was tired of hoping for the return of her play-mate, she came to this place to think about him, and wonder whether he thought of her. And

now in the soft December evening (lonely and sad, but fair to look at, like herself) she was sitting here.

The keen east wind, which had set in as Captain Brown predicted, was over now and succeeded by the gentler influence of the west. Nothing could be heard in this calm nook, but the lingering touch of the dying breeze, and the long soft murmur of the distant sea, and the silvery plash of a pair of coots at play. Neither was much to be seen, except the wavering light, and long shadows of the mere, the tracery of trees against the fading sky, and the outline of the maiden, as she leaned against the trunk. Generations of goat-moths, in their early days of voracity, had made a nice hollow for her hat to rest in, and some of the powdering willow dusted her bright luxuriant locks with gold. Her face was by no means wan or gloomy, and she added to the breezes not a single sigh. This happened without any hardness of heart, or shallow contempt of the nobler affections; simply from the hopefulness of healthful youth, and the trust a good will has in powers of good.

She was looking at those coots, who were

full of an idea that the winter had spent itself in that east wind, that the gloss of spring plumage must be now upon their necks, and that they felt their toes growing warmer towards the downy tepefaction of a perfect nest. Improving a long and kind acquaintance with these birds, some of whom have confidence in human nature, Mary was beginning to be absent from her woes, and joyful in the pleasure of a thoughtless pair; when suddenly, with one accord, they dived, and left a bright splash and a wrinkle. "Somebody is coming. They must have seen an enemy," said the damsel to herself; "I am sure I never moved. I will never have them shot by any wicked poacher." To watch the bank nicely, without being seen, she drew in her skirt and shrank behind the tree, not from any fear, but just to catch that fellow; for one of the labourers on the farm, who had run at his master with a pitchfork once, was shrewdly suspected of poaching with a gun. But keener eyes than those of any poacher were upon her, and the lightest of light steps approached.

"Oh, Robin, are you come then, at last?" cried Mary.

"Three days, I have been lurking, in the hope of this. Heart of my heart, are you glad to see me?"

"I should think that I was. It is worth a world of crying. Oh, where have you been, this long, long time?"

"Let me have you in my arms, if it is but for a moment. You are not afraid of me—you are not ashamed to love me?"

"I love you all the better for your many dreadful troubles. Not a word do I believe of all the wicked people say of you. Don't be afraid of me. You may kiss me, Robin."

"You are such a beautiful spick and span! And I am only fit to go into the pond. Oh, Mary, what a shame of me, to take advantage of you!"

"Well, I think that it is time for you to leave off now. Though you must not suppose that I think twice about my things. When I look at you, it makes me long to give you my best cloak and a tidy hat. Oh, where is all your finery gone, poor Robin?"

"Endeavour not to be insolent, on the strength of your fine clothes. Remember that I have abandoned free trade; and the price of every article will rise at once."

Mary Anerley not only smiled, but laughed, with the pleasure of a great relief. She had always scorned the idea that her lover had even made a shot at Carroway, often though the brave lieutenant had done the like to him; and now she felt sure that he could clear himself; or how could he be so light-hearted?

"You see that I am scarcely fit to lead off a country-dance with you," said Robin, still holding both her hands, and watching the beauty of her clear bright eyes, which might gather big tears at any moment, as the deep blue sky is a sign of sudden rain; "and it will be a very long time, my darling, before you see me in gay togs again."

"I like you a great deal better so. You always look brave—but you look so honest now!"

"That is a most substantial saying; and worthy of the race of Anerley. How I wish that your father would like me, Mary! I suppose it is hopeless to wish for that."

"No, not at all—if you could keep on looking shabby. My dear father has a most generous mind. If he only could be brought to see how you are ill-treated—"

"Alas, I shall have no chance of letting him see that. Before to-morrow morning, I must say good-bye to England. My last chance of seeing you was now this evening. I bless every star that is in the heaven now. I trusted to my luck; and it has not deceived me."

"Robin dear, I never wish to try to be too pious. But I think that you should rather trust in Providence, than starlight."

"So I do. And it is Providence that has kept me out of sight. Out of sight of enemies, and in sight of you, my Mary. The Lord looks down on every place, where His lovely angels wander. You are one of His angels, Mary; and you have made a man of me. For years I shall not see you, darling; never more again, perhaps. But as long as I live, you will be here; and the place shall be kept pure for you. If we only could have a shop together—oh, how honest I would be! I would give full weight besides the paper; I would never sell an egg more than three weeks old; and I would not even adulterate! But that is a dream of the past, I fear. Oh, I never shall hoist the Royal Arms. But I mean to serve under them,

and fight my way. My captain shall be Lord Nelson."

"That is the very thing that you were meant for. I will never forgive Dr. Upandown, for not putting you into the navy. You could have done no smuggling then."

"I am not altogether sure of that. However I will shun scandal; as behoves a man who gets so much. You have not asked me to clear myself of that horrible thing about poor Carroway. I love you the more for not asking me; it shows your faith so purely. But you have the right to know all I know; there is no fear of any interruption here; so Mary, I will tell you; if you are sure that you can bear it."

"Yes, oh yes! Do tell me all you know. It is so frightful, that I must hear it."

"What I have to say will not frighten you, darling; because I did not even see the deed. But my escape was rather strange, and deserves telling better than I can tell it, even with you to encourage me by listening. When we were so suddenly caught in the cave, through treachery of some of our people, I saw in a moment that we must be taken, but resolved to have some fun for it, with a

kind of whim which comes over me sometimes. So I knocked away the lights, and began myself to splash with might and main, and ordered the rest to do likewise. We did it so well, that the place was like a fountain or a geyser; and I sent a great dollop of water into the face of the poor lieutenant—the only assault I have ever made upon him. There was just light enough for me to know him, because he was so tall and strange; but I doubt whether he knew me at all. He became excited, as he well might be, he dashed away the water from his eyes with one hand, and with the other made a wild sword-cut, rushing forward as if to have at me. Like a bird, I dived into the water from our gunwale, and under the keel of the other boat, and rose to the surface at the far side of the cave. In the very act of plunging, a quick flash came before me; or at least I believed so afterwards, and a loud roar, as I struck the wave. It might have been only from my own eyes and ears receiving so suddenly the cleavage of the water. If I thought anything at all about it, it was that somebody had shot at me; but expecting to be followed, I swam rapidly away. I did not even look back, as I kept in

the dark of the rocks, for it would have lost a stroke, and a stroke was more than I could spare. To my great surprise, I heard no sound of any boat coming after me, nor any shouts of Carroway, such as I am accustomed to. But swimming as I was, for my own poor life, like an otter with a pack of hounds after him, I assure you I did not look much after anything, except my own run of the gauntlet."

"Of course not. How could you? It makes me draw my breath, to think of you swimming in the dark like that, with deep water, and caverns, and guns, and all!"

"Mary, I thought that my time was come; and only one beautiful image sustained me, when I came to think of it afterwards. I swam with my hands well under water, and not a breath that could be heard, and my cap tucked into my belt, and my sea-going pumps slipped away into a pocket. The water was cold, but it only seemed to freshen me, and I found myself able to breathe very pleasantly in the gentle rise and fall of waves. Yet I never expected to escape, with so many boats to come after me. For now I could see two boats outside, as well as old Carroway's pin-

nace in the cave; and if once they caught sight of me, I could never get away.

"When I saw those two boats upon the watch outside, I scarcely knew what to do for the best, whether to put my breast to it and swim out, or to hide in some niche with my body under water, and cover my face with oar-weed. Luckily I took the bolder course, remembering their port-fires, which would make the cave like day. Not everybody could have swum out through that entrance, against a spring tide and the lollop of the sea; and one dash against the rocks would have settled me. But I trusted in the Lord, and tried a long, slow stroke.

"My enemies must have been lost in dismay, and panic, and utter confusion, or else they must have espied me, for twice, or thrice, as I met the waves, my head and shoulders were thrown above the surface, do what I would; and I durst not dive, for I wanted my eyes every moment. I kept on the darkest side, of course, but the shadows were not half so deep as I could wish; and most of all, outside there was a piece of moonlight, which I must cross within fifty yards of the bigger of the sentry boats.

"The mouth of that cave is two fathoms wide for a longish bit of channel; and, Mary dear, if I had not been supported by continual thoughts of you, I must have gone against the sides, or downright to the bottom, from the waves keeping knocking me about so. I may tell you, that I felt that I should never care again, as my clothes began to bag about me, except to go down to the bottom and be quiet, but for the blessed thought of standing up some day, at the 'hymeneal altar,' as great people call it, with a certain lovely Mary."

"Oh, Robin, now, you make me laugh; when I ought to be quite crying. If such a thing should ever be, I shall expect to see you swimming."

"Such a thing will be, as sure as I stand here; though not at all in hymeneal garb just now. Whatever my whole heart is set upon, I do, and overcome all obstacles. Remember that, and hold fast, darling. However, I had now to overcome the sea, which is worse than any tide in the affairs of men. A long and hard tussle it was, I assure you, to fight against the in-draught, and to drag my frame through the long hillocky gorge. At last

however I managed it; and to see the open waves again put strength into my limbs, and vigour into my knocked-about brain. I suppose that you cannot understand it, Mary; but I never enjoyed a thing more than the danger of crossing that strip of moonlight. I could see the very eyes and front teeth of the men, who were sitting there to look out for me, if I should slip their mates inside; and knowing the twist of every wave, and the vein of every tide-run, I rested in a smooth dark spot, and considered their manners quietly. They had not yet heard a word of any doings in the cavern, but their natures were up for some business to do, as generally happens with beholders. Having nothing to do, they were swearing at the rest.

"In the place where I was halting now, the line of a jagged cliff seemed to cut the air, and fend off the light from its edges. You can only see such a thing from the level of the sea, and it looks very odd when you see it, as if the moon and you were a pair of playing children, feeling round a corner for a glimpse of one another. But plain enough it was, and far too plain, that the doubling of that little cape would treble my danger, by

reason of the bold moonlight. I knew that my only refuge was another great hollow in the crags between the cave I had escaped from and the point—a place which is called the 'Church Cave,' from an old legend that it leads up to Flamborough church. To the best of my knowledge it does nothing of the kind, at any rate now ; but it has a narrow fissure known to few except myself, up which a nimble man may climb; and this was what I hoped to do. Also it has a very narrow entrance, through which the sea flows into it, so that a large boat cannot enter, and a small one would scarcely attempt it in the dark, unless it were one of my own, hard-pressed. Now it seemed almost impossible for me to cross that moonlight, without being seen by those fellows in the boat, who could pull of course four times as fast as I could swim, not to mention the chances of a musket-ball. However, I was just about to risk it, for my limbs were growing very cold, when I heard a loud shout from the cave which I had left, and knew that the men there were summoning their comrades. These at once lay out upon their oars, and turned their backs to me, and now was my good time. The boat came hiss-

ing through the water towards the Dovecot, while I stretched away for the other snug cave; being all in a flurry they kept no look-out; if the moon was against me, my good stars were in my favour. Nobody saw me, and I laughed in my wet sleeves, as I thought of the rage of Carroway, little knowing that the fine old fellow was beyond all rage or pain."

"How wonderful your luck was, and your courage too!" cried Mary, who had listened with bright tears upon her cheeks. "Not one man in a thousand could have done so bold a thing. And how did you get away at last, poor Robin?"

"Exactly as I meant to do, from the time I formed my plan. The Church has ever been a real friend in need to me; I took the name for a lucky omen, and swam in with a brisker stroke. It is the prettiest of all the caves to my mind, though the smallest, with a sweet round basin, and a playful little beach, and nothing very terrible about it. I landed and rested with a thankful heart, upon the shelly couch of the mermaids."

"Oh, Robin, I hope none of them came to you. They are so wonderfully beautiful.

And no one that ever has seen them cares any more for—for dry people that wear dresses."

"Mary, you delight me much, by showing signs of jealousy. Fifty may have come, but I saw not one, for I fell into a deep calm sleep. If they had come, I would have spurned them all, not only from my constancy to you, my dear, but from having had too much drip already. Mary, I see a man on the other side of the mere, not opposite to us, but a good bit further down. You see those two swimming birds, look far away between them, you will see something moving."

"I see nothing, either standing still or moving. It is growing too dark for any eyes not thoroughly trained in smuggling. But that reminds me to tell you, Robin, that a strange man—a gentleman they seemed to say, has been seen upon our land, and he wanted to see me, without my father knowing it. But only think! I have never even asked you whether you are hungry—perhaps even starving! How stupid, how selfish, how churlish of me! But the fault is yours, because I had so much to hear of."

"Darling, you may trust me not to starve. I can feed by and by. For the present I must talk, that you may know all about everything, and bear me harmless in your mind, when evil things are said of me. Have you heard that I went to see Widow Carroway, even before she had heard of her loss, but not before I was hunted? I knew that I must do so, now or never, before the whole world was up in arms against me; and I thank God that I saw her. A man might think nothing of such an act, or even might take it for hypocrisy; but a woman's heart is not so black. Though she did not even know what I meant, for she had not felt her awful blow, and I could not tell her of it, she did me justice afterwards. In the thick of her terrible desolation, she stood beside her husband's grave, in Bridlington Priory Churchyard, and she said to a hundred people there, 'Here lies my husband, foully murdered. The Coroner's jury have brought their verdict against Robin Lyth, the smuggler. Robin Lyth is as innocent as I am. I know who did it, and time will show. My curse is upon him; and my eyes are on him now.' Then she fell down in a fit, and the Preventive men, who were drawn up in a

row, came and carried her away. Did anybody tell you, darling? Perhaps they keep such things from you."

"Part of it I heard; but not so clearly. I was told that she acquitted you; and I blessed her in my heart for it."

"Even more than that she did. As soon as she got home again, she wrote to Robin Cockscroft—a very few words, but as strong as could be; telling him that I should have no chance of justice, if I were caught just now; that she must have time to carry out her plans; that the Lord would soon raise up good friends to help her, and as sure as there was a God in heaven, she would bring the man who did it to the gallows. Only that I must leave the land at once. And that is what I shall do this very night. Now I have told you almost all. Mary, we must say 'good-bye.'"

"But surely I shall hear from you sometimes?" said Mary, striving to be brave, and to keep her voice from trembling. "Years and years, without a word—and the whole world bitter against you and me! Oh, Robin, I think that it will break my heart. And I must not even talk of you!"

"Think of me, darling, while I think of you.

Thinking is better than talking. I shall never talk of you, but be thinking all the more. Talking ruins thinking. Take this token of the time you saved me, and give me that bit of blue ribbon, my Mary; I shall think of your eyes, every time I kiss it. Kiss it yourself before you give it to me."

Like a good girl, she did what she was told to do. She gave him the love-knot from her breast, and stored his little trinket in that pure shrine.

"But sometimes—sometimes, I shall hear of you?" she whispered, lingering, and trembling in the last embrace.

"To be sure, you shall hear of me from time to time, through Robin and Joan Cockscroft. I will not grieve you, by saying—'be true to me,' my noble one, and my everlasting love."

Mary was comforted, and ceased to cry. She was proud of him thus in the depth of his trouble; and she prayed to God to bless him through the long sad time.

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